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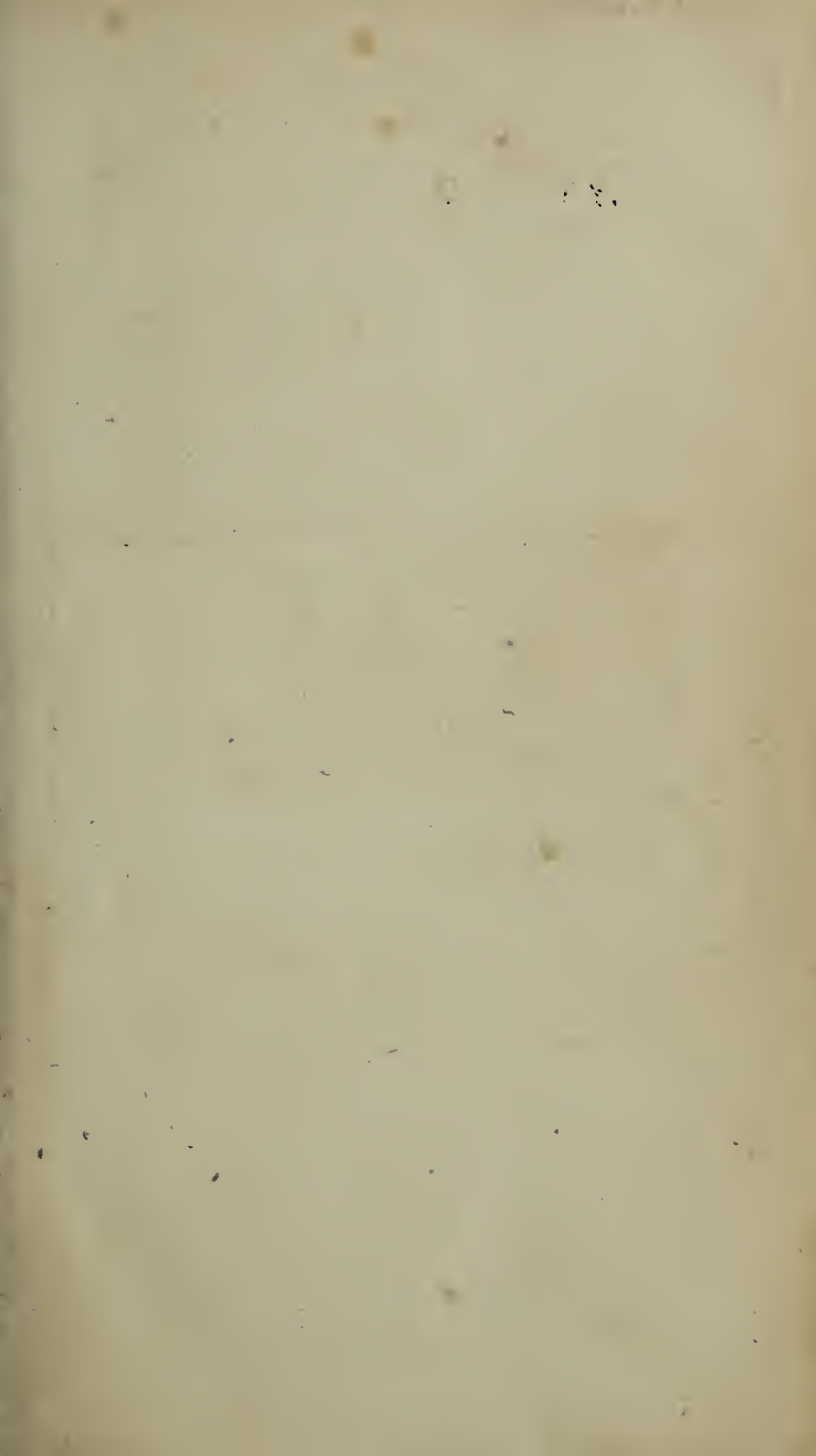
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The living temple











*W. L. G.*

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WITH  
INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS.

Nº 50.





THE  
LIVING TEMPLE;

OR,

A GOOD MAN THE TEMPLE OF GOD.

BY THE

REV. JOHN HOWE, A.M.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY

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## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

It is well remarked by the excellent JOHN HOWE, in the following Treatise, that the "Living Temple," or, as it is frequently styled in the New Testament, the "Kingdom of Heaven," which God is setting up in the world, "is not established by might or by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord; who—as the structure is spiritual, and to be situated and raised up in the mind or spirit of man—works, in order to it, in a way suitable thereto; that is, very much by soft and gentle insinuations, to which are subservient the self-recommending amiableness and comely aspect of religion, the discernible gracefulness and uniform course of such in whom it bears rule, and is a settled, living law. It is a structure to which there is a concurrence of truth and holiness; the former letting in a vital, directive, formative light—the latter, a heavenly, calm, and godlike frame of spirit." To the same import is the declaration of our Saviour, when, in answer to the Pharisees, who demanded of him when the kingdom of God should come, replied, "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or,

lo, there ! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." We are thus given to understand, that the kingdom which God is establishing in the world, does not consist in external forms and observances—that it is not of a temporal, but of a spiritual character—and that, unlike the establishment of earthly kingdoms, it cometh with none of those visible accompaniments which meet the eye of public observation.

The establishment of a new kingdom in the world carries much in it to strike the eye of an observer. There is a deal of visible movement accompanying the progress of such an event—the march of armies, and the bustle of conspiracies, and the exclamations of victories, and the triumph of processions, and the splendour of coronations. All these doings are performed upon a conspicuous theatre ; and there is not an individual in the country, who, if not an actor, may not be at least an observer on the elevated stage of great and public revolutions. He can point his finger, and say, Lo, here ! or, lo, there ! to the symptoms of political change which are around him ; and the clamorous discontent of one province, and the warlike turbulence of another, and the loud expressions of public sentiment at home, and the report of preparation abroad—all force themselves upon the notice of spectators ; so that when a new kingdom is set up in the world, that kingdom cometh with observation.

The answer of our Saviour to the question of the Pharisees, may be looked upon as a design to correct their misconceptions respecting the nature of the kingdom which he was to establish. There is no doubt that they all looked for a deliverance from



the yoke of Roman authority—that, in their eyes, the Captain of their Salvation was to be the leader of a mighty host, who, fighting under the special protection of God, would scatter dismay and overthrow among the oppressors of their country—that the din of war, and the pride of conquest, and the glories of a widely-extended dominion, and all the visible parade of a supreme and triumphant monarchy, were to shed a lustre over their beloved land. And it must have been a sore mortification to them all, when they saw the pretensions of the Messiah associated with the poverty, and the meekness, and the humble, unambitious, and spiritual character of Jesus of Nazareth. We cannot justify the tone of his persecutors; but we must perceive, at the same time, the historical consistency of all their malice, and bitterness, and irritated pride, with the splendour of those expectations on which they had been feasting for years, and which gave a secret elevation to their souls under the endurance of their country's bondage, and their country's wrongs. It marks—and it marks most strikingly—how the thoughts of God are not as the thoughts of man; that the actual fulfilment of those prophecies which related to the history of Judea, turned out so differently from the anticipations of the men who lived in it; and that Jerusalem, which in point of expectation, was to sit as mistress over a tributary world, was, in point of fact, torn up from its foundations, after the vial of God's wrath had been poured in a tide of unexampled misery over the heads of its wretched people. Now what became all the while of those prophecies which respected the Messiah? What became of that

kingdom of God which the Pharisees enquired about, and of which, however much they were in the wrong respecting its nature, they were certainly in the right respecting the time of its appearance? Did it actually appear? Is it possible that it could be working its way, at the very time that every hope which man conceived of it was turned into the cruellest mockery? Is it possible that the truth of prophecy could be receiving its most splendid vindication, at the very time that every human interpreter was put to shame, and that all that happened was the reverse of all that was anticipated? Surely if any kingdom was formed at that time, when the besom of destruction passed through the land of Judea, and swept the whole fabric of its institutions away from it—surely if it was such a kingdom as was to spread, through the seed of Abraham, the promised blessing among all the families of the earth, and that, too, when a cloud of ignominy was gathering upon the descendants of Abraham—surely if at the time when Pagans desolated the Land of Promise, and profaned the temple, and entered the holy place, and wantoned in barbarous levity among those sacred courts, where the service of the true God had been kept for many generations—surely if at such a time, and with such a burden of disgrace and misery on the people of Israel, a kingdom was formed that was to be the glory of that people—then it is not to be wondered at that no earthly eye should see it under the gloom of that disastrous period, or that the kingdom of God, coming as it did in the midst of wars and rumours of wars, when men's eyes were looking at other things, and their

hearts were failing them, should have eluded their observation.

In common language, a kingdom carries our thoughts to the country over which it is established. The kingdom of Sweden directs the eye of our mind to that part of Europe; and in the various places of the Bible where the kingdom of God, and the kingdom of heaven are mentioned, this is one of the significations. But it has also other significations. It sometimes means, not the place over which the royal authority extends, but the royal authority itself. In the first sense, the kingdom of heaven carries our attention to heaven; but with this as the meaning, we could not understand what John the Baptist pointed to, when he said “the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” But, in the second sense, it is quite intelligible, and means that the authority which subordinates all the families of heaven to the one Monarch who reigns there, was on the eve of being established with efficacy on earth; or, in other words, that the prayer was now beginning its accomplishment—“Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.” Hence it is that some translators, for the term *kingdom*, substitute the term *reign*; and make our Saviour say, that the reign of God cometh not with observation, for the reign of God is within you. The will of man is the proper seat of the authority of God. It is there where rebellion against him exists in its principle; and where that rebellion is overthrown, it is there where the authority of God sits in triumph over all his enemies. Give him the will of man, and invest that will with an efficient control over



the doings of man, and you give him all he wants. You render him the one act of obedience which embraces every other. "Give me thy heart," is a precept, the performance of which involves in it the surrender of all the man to all the requirements. It brings the whole life under its authority; for it takes that into its keeping out of which are the issues of life. And could these hearts of ours be brought into subjection to the first and great commandment, obedience would cease to be a task; for we would delight to run in the way of it. To do it would be our meat and our drink. We would know, in the experience of our own lives, that the commandments of God are not grievous. It is only grievous to do that which is against the bent of the will. But to do that which is with the bent of the will, contains in it all the facility of a natural and spontaneous movement. It is doing what is a pleasure to ourselves. It is said to be one of the attributes of rebellion, that it walks in the counsel of its own heart, and in the sight of its own eyes. But this is only when the heart is alienated from the God of heaven, and the eyes are blinded by the god of this world. Give us a heart which the purifying grace of the Gospel hath made clean, and eyes to which Christ hath given light, and then it is no longer rebellion to walk in the counsel of such a heart, and in the sight of such eyes. Obedience against the desires and tendencies of the heart is painful as the drudgery of a slave; and, in fact, to the eye of God, who thinks that if he has not the heart he has nothing, it is no obedience at all—but obedience, with these desires and tendencies, is car-



ried on with all the spring and energy of a pleasurable exercise. And, oh! precious privilege of him who is made by faith to partake in the heart-purifying influence of the Gospel! It is the very pleasure which we take in the doing of God's will, and which makes it so delightful to us, that gives to our performances all their value in the eye of God. We will be at no loss to understand the happiness of a well-founded Christian, when the doing of that which is in the highest degree delightful to himself, meets, and is at one, with all the security of God's friendship and God's approbation. We are now touching upon such an experience of the inner man as the world knoweth not, and are describing the mysteries of such a kingdom as the world discerneth not; but whether all our readers go along with us or not, it remains true, that if the love of God be made to reign within, us, his will becomes our will. And this commandment proves itself to be the first of all; for when it is fulfilled, the fulfilment of all the rest follows in its train—and the greatest of all; for it, as it were, takes a wide enough sweep to enclose them all, and to form a guard and a security for their observance.

The reign of God on earth, then, is the reign of his will over the unseen movements of the inner man. This is the kingdom he wants to establish. It is the submission of that which is within us, that he claims as his due; and if it be withheld from him, all the conformity of our outer doings is a vain and an empty sacrifice. Give us a right mind towards God, and you give us, in the individual who owns that mind, all the elements of loyalty. It is there

where his authority is felt and acknowledged to be a rightful authority. It is there where its requirements are looked at by the understanding, and laid upon the conscience, and move the will with all the force of a resistless obligation, and form the purpose of obedience, and send forth that purpose, armed with the full power of a presiding influence, over every step and movement of his history. It is in the busy chamber of the mind where all that is great and essential in the work of obedience is carried on. The mighty struggle between the powers of heaven and of hell is for the possession of this little chamber. The subtle enemy of our race knows, that while he has this for his lodging-place, the empire is his own—and give him only the citadel of the heart, and he will revel in all the glories of his undivided monarchy. The strong man reigns in his house with the full authority of its master, till a stronger than he overcome him, and bind him, and take possession of that which he before occupied. And such is the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience. It is in the heart of man that he worketh, and is ever plying it with his wiles and contrivances, and turning its affections to the creature, and blinding it to all that is glorious or lovely in the image of the Creator; and by his power over the fancy, causing it to imagine a greatness, and stability, and a value, and an enjoyment in the things of the world which do not belong to them; and whispering false promises to the ear of the inner man, and seducing him as he did the first of our race, so as to bring him into the snare of the devil, and to take him captive at his will. In the same manner, he who came to destroy the

works of the devil, bends his main force to the quarter where these works are strongest, and their position is most advantageous to the enemy. The heart of man is the mighty subject of this spiritual contest, and the possession of the heart is the prize of victory. To those who have not yet learned to take their lesson from the Bible, all this sounds like a fabulous imagination, or the legendary tale of an artful priesthood to a driveling and superstitious people. But it is all to be met with in God's revealed communication. You are ignorant of what you ought to know, if you know not that a contest is going on among the higher orders of being for the mastery of all that is within you. Let Christ then dwell in you by faith. He is knocking at the door of your heart, and if you will open it to receive him, he will enter it. He will sweep it of all its corruptions. He will enable you to overcome, for then greater will be he that is in you than he that is in the world. The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost; and he making you, by the power of his Spirit, to abound in these fruits will in you make another addition to that living temple—that spiritual kingdom which God is establishing in the world.

Man has revolted from God, and a fearful change has taken place in his moral constitution; and thus the things of sight and of sense, instead of leading his thoughts to God, have become the idolatrous objects of his affections. In his original state of innocence, man not only held direct and intimate communion with God, but all that he saw, and all that he enjoyed, conducted his thoughts and his affections to



that Being whose love and whose authority reigned in supremacy over his heart. The gratification of his desire for created things, was then in perfect harmony with the love of the Creator. And man would just now have been in this condition if he had not fallen. He would not have counted it his duty, to have violently counteracted his every taste, and every desire, for the things which are created. The practical habit of his life would not have been a constant and strenuous opposition to all that could minister delight to the sensitive part of his constitution. He would not have been ever and anon employed in thwarting the adaptations which God had ordained between the objects that are around him, and his organs of enjoyment. It is true, that when Eve put forth her hand to the forbidden fruit, it was after she had looked upon the tree, and seen that it was good for food, and pleasant to the eyes: but the very same thing is said of the other trees in the garden, “for out of the ground made the Lord to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food.” Our first parents tasted of all these trees without offence,—and in that habitation of sweets many an avenue of enjoyment was open to them; and a thousand ways may well be conceived, in which the loveliness of surrounding nature would minister delight both to the eye and the feeling of our first parents,—and from every point of that external materialism which God had reared for his accommodation, would there beam a felicity upon the creature whom he had so organized, as to suit his capacities of pleasure to his outward circumstances. We are not to conceive, that



during that short-lived period of the world's innocence, and of heaven's favour, there was no gratification transmitted to the soul of man from the sensible and created things which were on every side of him. His taste was gratified,—and amid the pure luxury, and among the delicious repasts of paradise, might be perceived in him a principle of desire, corresponding to what in our days of depravity is termed the lust of the flesh. His eye was gratified,—and as he surveyed the beauties of his garden, and felt himself to be its vested and rightful proprietor, would he experience a principle of desire, which, in its transmission to a corrupt posterity, has now become the lust of the eye. His sense of superior dignity was gratified,—and as he stalked in benevolent majesty among the tribes of creation that had been placed beneath him, would he feel the kindlings of that very affection, which, tainted by the malignity of sin, has sunk down among his offspring into the pride of life. All these affections, which in a state of guilt have so virulent an operation on the heart, as to be opposite to the love of God,—there is not one of them but may have had a pure and a righteous counterpart in a state of innocence. —

And the whole explanation of the matter appears simply to be this. Adam lived at that time in communion with God. In all that he enjoyed, he saw a giver's hand, and a giver's kindness. That link, by which the happiness he derived from the use of the creature was associated with the love of the Creator, was clearly and constantly present with him. There was not one thing which he either tasted or saw, that was not regarded by him as a token of the Divine

beneficence ; insomuch that the expression of a Father's care, and a Father's tenderness, beamed upon his senses, from every one object with which his senses came into intercourse. Whatever he looked upon with the eye of his body, was but to him the material vehicle, through which the love of the great Author of all found its way to him, with some new accession of enjoyment ; nor could there one pleasurable feeling then be made to arise, which was not most exquisitely heightened, and most intimately pervaded, by the grateful remembrance of him who had placed him in his present condition, and whose liberal hand had done so much to bless and to adorn it. In the case of a human benefactor, there is no difficulty in perceiving, that there is room in the heart, both for a sense of gratification from the gift, and for a sense of gratitude to the giver. In the case of the heavenly Benefactor, the union of these two things stood constant and inseparable, and was only dissolved by the fall. A sense of God mingled with every influence that came from the surrounding materialism upon our first parents. It impregnated all. It sanctified all. The things of sense did not detain them for a single moment from God ; because, while busied with the work of enjoyment, they were equally busied with the work of gratitude. All that they tasted, or handled, or saw, were memorials of the Divinity ; insomuch that his visible presence in the garden was never felt to be an interruption. It only made Him present to their senses, who was constantly present to their thoughts. It for a time withdrew them from some of the scenes on which his character was imprinted ; but it summoned them to a direct contemplation of the charac-

ter itself. While it suspended their enjoyment of a few of the tokens of his love, it gave them a nearer and more affecting enjoyment of its reality; and instead of reluctantly withdrawing from those objects which were merely dear to them as the reflections of his kindness, when he called them to an act of fellowship with the kindness itself, did they recognise his voice, and obeyed it with ecstasy.

Now, without adverting to the way in which the transition from the former to the present state of man's moral nature has taken place—such in fact has been the transition, that the two states are not only unlike, but in direct and diametric opposition to each other—there is no such change in his physical constitution, but that what tasted pleurably to him in his state of innocence, tastes pleurably to him still—and what looked fair to him in external nature then, looks fair to him now—and in many instances, what regaled his senses in the one state, is equally fitted to regale them in the other. The purity of Eden did not lie in the want or the weakness of all physical sensation; neither does the guilt of our accursed world lie in the existence, or even in the strength, of physical sensation. But in the former state, the gift stood at all times associated in the mind of man with the giver. God rejoiced over his children to do them good; and they, while rejoicing in the good that they obtained, felt it all to be heightened and pervaded by a sense of his kindness. Every new accession to their enjoyment, instead of seducing them from their loyalty, only served to confirm it; and brought a new accession to that love, which made their duty to be their delight, and



their highest privilege and pleasure to be the keeping of his commandments. The moral and spiritual change which our race has undergone, consisted in this—that the tie in their minds was broken, by which the enjoyment of the gift led to a sense and a recognition of the giver. It is the breaking asunder of this link which simply and essentially forms the corruption of man. He drinks of the stream, without any recognition of the fountain from which it flows. God is banished from his gratitude and from his thoughts. With him the whole business of enjoyment is made up of an intercourse between his senses, and the objects that are suited to them. There is no intercourse between his mind and that Being, who is the author both of his senses, and of all that is fitted to regale them. He makes use of created things, and has pleasure in the use of them. But in that pleasure he rests and terminates. Instead of vehicles leading him to God, they are in his eye stationary and ultimate objects; the possession of which, and the enjoyment of which, are all that he aspires after. Pleasure is prosecuted for itself. Wealth is prosecuted for itself. Distinction is prosecuted for itself. There is no wish on the part of natural men for a portion in any thing beyond these. God is not the object of their desire, and he is just as little the object of their dependence. It is neither God whom they are seeking, nor is it to God that they look for the attainment of what they are seeking. They count upon fortune, and experience, and the constancy of the course of nature, and any thing but the power, and the purposes, and the sovereignty of God. He, in fact, is deposed from his



supremacy, both as an object of desire and an object of dependence. Men have deeply revolted from God; and they have raised the world, not into a rival, but into the sole and triumphant divinity of their adoration. The lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, may have all had their counterpart in the constitution of Adam ere he fell; but instead of averting his eye from the Father, they brought the Father more vividly into his remembrance—instead of intercepting God, they conducted both his thoughts and his affections to the Being who openeth his hand liberally, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing. But with the diseased posterity of Adam, these affections are only so many idolatrous desires towards the creature—so many acts of homage towards the world, regarded in the light of a satisfying and independent Deity—and therefore is it said of them, that “they are not of the Father, but of the world.”

Now, to bring this home to familiar experience—who is there, in looking forward with delight to some entertainment of luxury—or who is there, in prosecuting with intense devotion some enterprise of gain—or who is there, in adding to the pomp of his establishment, that ever thinks of God as having furnished the means, or as having created the materials of these respective gratifications? They look no farther than to the materials themselves. For the indulgence of these various affections, they draw not upon God, but upon this solid and visible world, to which they ascribe all the power and all the independency of God. They look not to any pleasure which they enjoy as emanating from the first

cause. They see it emanating from secondary causes; and with these do they stop short, and are satisfied. It is this which stamps the guilt of atheism on the whole practical habit and system of human life. In the prosecution of its objects, not one civil obligation may have been violated—not one deed may have been committed to forfeit the respect of society—not one thing may ever have been charged upon this world's idolater to alienate the regard, but every thing may have been done by him to conciliate the kindness, and draw down upon him the flattery of his fellow-men. But, alas! he has broken loose from God! He lives from the cradle to the grave, without any practical recognition of Him in whom he lives, and moves, and has his being. A demonstration of social virtue, so far from offending, may minister to his complacency. But to bid him crucify his affections for the things of sense, is to bid him inflict a suicide upon his person. And thus, while beneficent in conduct, and fair in reputation among his fellows, may he in prospect be linked with the fate of a world that is soon to be burnt up, and in character be tainted with the spirit of a world that is lying in wickedness. And thus it is, that there may be spiritual guilt in the midst of social accomplishment—there may be wrath from heaven in the midst of applause and connivance from the world—there may be impending disaster in the midst of imagined safety—there may be abomination in the sight of God, in the midst of highest esteem and popularity among men.

There is nothing in the daily routine of this world's luxury, or this world's covetousness, or this world's ambition, which suggests to its carnal and

earth-born children the conviction of sinfulness. The round of pleasure is described, or the career of adventure is prosecuted, or the path of aggrandizement is entered upon; and it does not once meet the imagination of this world's votary, that, in every one of these pursuits, he is widening his departure from God. He is not aware of the deathly character of his habits; and, protect him only from the voice of human execration, he hears, or hears without alarm, that voice of truth which pronounces him wholly given over to idolatry. And yet can any thing be more evident, even of the most harmless and reputable members of society, than that the gifts of a kind and liberal Father have stolen away from him the affections of his own children—than that they have taken up with another portion, than with him who originates and sustains them—than that they have built their foundation on the creature, and look on the Creator with the defiance at least of unconcern? They in reality have disjoined themselves from God. Instead of being conducted by the sight of the world to the thought of God, they look no farther than the world, and it stands in their hearts contrasted with God. Instead of the one leading to the other, the one detains and withdraws from the other. They are so conversant with the world as to lose sight of God. For this we can appeal to the conscience of every natural man, and on this we ground the affirmation, that though in the keen pursuit of the money which purchaseth all things, he may have never deviated from the onward path of integrity, he has been receding by every footstep to a greater distance from heaven—and with an eye averted from God, has



been looking towards those things, the love of which is opposite to the love of the Father.

And it is because men are thus engrossed with the visible objects of time, that they have lost sight of their own individual concern in that spiritual kingdom which God is setting up in the world. Because it does not rank among the visibilities of earth, it is looked at by them with the most heedless indifference, and they regard its existence as a fiction of the imagination. The subject of that kingdom is indeed invisible. It worketh its silent and unseen way through the world of souls, and it may be multiplying its objects, and widening the extent of its dominion every day, without the eye of man being able to perceive it. There is a day of revelation coming; and the hidden things which are to be laid open on that day are the secrets of the heart. But, in the mean time, the heart is, in a great measure, shut up from observation; and many of its movements will remain unnoticed and unknown till that day shall discover them. And we are expressly told, that that greatest of all movements, by which it turns from Satan unto God, is a hidden operation. It is said of the Spirit, who worketh this movement, that no man knoweth whence it cometh, or whither it goeth. It makes its noiseless way through streets and families. The visible instrument which God employs may come equally to all who are within its reach; but the effect which the Spirit giveth to that instrument, is not a matter of direct perception, nor can we tell who the individual is whose heart it will ply with the word of God, so as to give all the weight and power



of a hammer breaking the rock in pieces. O how much of the inner man remains impenetrably hidden under all that is visible in the general aspect of society ! To man himself it is an unknown field, though the beings who are above man have all their eyes upon it. In looking to human affairs, it is the only field they deem worthy of contemplation. The frail and fleeting materials of common history are as nothing in the eye of those who count nothing important but that which has stamped upon it the character of eternity. To recommend it to them, it must have the attribute of endurance : or, in other words, it must be related to souls, which are the only subjects in this world that God hath endued with the vigour of immortality. Now the soul of man is invisible to us, nor can we see, as through a window, its desires, and its movements, and its silent aspirations. There is a thick covering of sense thrown over it ; and thus it is, that what, to the eye of angels, appears the only worthy object of attention in the history of the species is, to the eye of man himself, an unknown mystery. His eye is engrossed with the glare of what is seen, and of what is sensible ; and the secrecies of the soul lie on the back ground of his contemplation altogether. He knows as little of the busy doings which go on in the heart of his neighbour, as he knows of what goes on on the surface of some remote and undiscovered world. In the wildness of immensity, there are fields so distant as to be beyond the ken of eye or of telescope ; but there is also a field immediately around us, which lies wrapt in unfathomable secrecy. O it is little dwelt upon by man, whose thoughts are so taken up

with what the eye seeth, and the ear can listen to. But on this field there are doings of mightier import than the whole visible universe lays before us. It forms part of the world of spirits. It is the field of discipline for eternity. It is the field on which is decided the fate of conscious and never-ending existence. It is a province in the moral government of God, and in worth outweighs all the splendour and all the richness of that material magnificence which is around us. The earth is to be burnt up, and the heavens are to pass away as a scroll; but on this near, though unnoticed field, there is a mighty interest now forming, which will survive the wreck of all that is visible; and it is there that God gains accessions to his kingdom which endureth for ever.

But there are two remarks by which we would limit and define the extent of what is said by our Saviour, about the kingdom of God coming not with observation. It holds true of every man who becomes the subject of that kingdom, that by his fruits ye shall know him. There is a visible style of conduct which bespeaks him to be a different man from others, and a different man from what he himself was before he entered into the kingdom of God. Let the reign of God be established over the inner man, and it will tell, and tell observably, upon the doings of the outer man. But remark here, that though the kingdom of God may be the subject of observation where it exists, yet the bringing of that kingdom into existence, or, in other words, the coming of that kingdom may not be with observation. Now, what is true of an individual, is true of many. The formation of the kingdom of God, in the hearts of the majority of a

neighbourhood, would give rise to a spectacle fitted to strike the general eye; and there is something broadly visible in the complexion of a renovated and moralised people. There is a change of aspect in the doings of every man who is born again, that meets the observation of his neighbours; and a sufficient number of such men would give rise to such a general change as to solicit general observation. But though the change, after it is established, may excite their notice, yet the coming on of the change may not excite their notice. The steps by which it is accomplished may elude the notice of the generality altogether. The little stone may be too small to draw upon it the attention of a distant world; but it may compel their attention by its progress, and even long before it filleth the whole earth, the whole earth may be filled with inquiries after it. The work of the Spirit is visible, but the working of the Spirit is not visible. He bloweth where he listeth; and though the kingdom of God, that he is to establish in the world, shall swallow up all the rest, and by its magnitude force itself upon the general observation, yet, in the first stages of its progress, and in the act of coming, it may not be with observation.

Our other remark is, that though the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, yet by the prophecies of God, the origin and the sudden enlargement of that kingdom have a place assigned to them in the march of visible history. The four great monarchies form conspicuous eras in the history of man. They come with observation, and they mark, in a general way, the infancy, and the growth, and the matured establishment of that kingdom which cometh not with



observation. We lie at the feet of Nebuchadnazzar's image. This is the place in the descending scale of ages which we occupy; and the present political aspect of Europe was seen afar by the prophet Daniel through the vista of many generations. The ten kingdoms into which the Roman empire was divided, form the closing scene in his magnificent representation of futurity; and it is this distant period which, in the mighty range of his prophetic eye, he is employed in contemplating, when he tells us of a kingdom made without hands, and, from the size of a little stone, growing into a mountain which filled the whole earth. The coming of these ten kingdoms carried on it a broad aspect, which addressed itself to the senses of men. They were ushered in with all the notes and characters of preparation. Kings met and kings combated on a conspicuous arena; the loud uproar of the battle was heard, and the rumour of it spread itself; and each of the predicted kingdoms made its entrance into the world, with the pomp, and the circumstance, and the visible insigna of war. It is in the time of these kingdoms that the kingdom of God is to break forth on every side; and the want of those visible accompaniments, which mark the progress and the establishment of other kingdoms, signalizes the kingdom of God, and stamps upon it the peculiar character of coming not with observation. There is a silence and a secrecy in the progress of this kingdom, which do not belong to the others. It has its signs too, but they are not such signs as the Pharisees were looking for, when they asked about the kingdom of God, and about the signs of its appearance. The interpreters of prophecy have been watch-



ing, for whole centuries, all the variations which take place in the restless politics of this world—they have been pursuing every fluctuation in the ever-changing history of the times,—but the ten toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image still represent the great outline of European society. It is not in the revolutions of political power that we are to look for the direct or immediate symptom of God's approaching kingdom. The effect of that kingdom is to revolutionize the hearts of men. The Alexander of a former day, filled with generous resentment at the wrongs of his outraged country, and gathering energy from despair, and marching at the head of a population rallying around the standard of revenge, out of all his provinces, and aided by the tempests of heaven, might have overwhelmed that power which had spread its desolating triumphs over half the monarchies of Europe. But all this might have been done, and the little stone have remained all the while stationary, and the flock of Christ received no addition to its numbers; and should the same rapacity of ambition exist among the rulers of the world, and the same profligacy among the people, and the same baleful infidelity among the learned, and the same lofty contempt for the holy spirit and doctrines of the Gospel among the upper classes of society, and the same devotedness to the good things of life spreading among all its classes a spiritual indifference to the law of God—then the kingdom of God has made no progress, and all the characters of Antichrist stand as deeply engraved as ever upon the aspect of the existing generation. But should the heart of the present Nicholas receive a secret visit from that Spirit which bloweth where he list-

eth—should it be turned, with all its affections, to the Saviour who died for him—should the renewed soul of the monarch own in silent reverence the power of a higher monarchy, and, instead of his plans and his purposes of ambition and war, should his heart be filled with the holy ambition of dedicating all his means and all his energies to the spread of Christianity in the world; then, in the solitude of his inner chamber, an unseen preparation might be going on for helping forward the establishment of the kingdom of God: and when we think of the small place which these doings occupy in the columns of a gazette, or in the deliberations of a cabinet, or in the earnest contemplation of the general mind in Europe—above all, when we think that they are chiefly carried on by men who, through the great mass of society, are derided or unknown—then may we well understand how a kingdom, spreading its unseen influence through such private channels, and earning all its triumphs in the heart and bosoms of individuals, is a kingdom which cometh not with observation.

✓ We may easily understand, from what has been stated, how inefficient must be many of the methods which are actually resorted to for extending true religion, or the kingdom of God, in the world. It is not by crusading it against the power of infidel governments, that you will establish this kingdom. It is not by enacting it against the heresy of unscriptural opinions, that you will carry forward the establishment of this kingdom. It is not by the solemn deliberations of a legislature, sitting in judgment over questions that can only be carried into effect by the civil authority of the state, that you can at all help forward the

establishment of this kingdom in the world. We will venture to say, that the mad enterprise of the middle ages did not add one subject to the kingdom of God. They may have stormed the holy city, so as to plant upon its battlements the standard of Christendom ; but they did not storm a single human heart, so as to plant within it a principle of holiness. The citadel of the heart must be plied with another engine : and the strong man who reigns and who occupies there, may smile and may sit in secure defiance to the warlike preparations of a whole continent. No external violence of any kind can force the will and the principle of man to its subserviency. Whatever effect it may have on the territory of earthly princes, it cannot add a single inch to the territory of the kingdom of God ; and that whether the instrument of religious frenzy be an army or a parliament, after expending all its force, and doing nothing, it is at length, by the working of another instrument, and the silent but powerful efficacy of another expedient, that we make a way for the establishment of God's Living Temple in the world.

This brings us to the question. What is this instrument ? The Spirit of God is the agent in every conversion of every human soul from Satan unto God. He is the alone effectual worker in this matter, but he worketh by instruments ; and it is our part to put them in readiness, and to do those things to the doing of which he stands pledged to impart the efficacy of his all-subduing influences. It was the Spirit, and he alone, who gave the apostles all the enlargement they got on the day of Pentecost : but they put themselves in readiness, by obeying the



prescribed direction to go to Jerusalem; and there they waited and they prayed for the promise of the Father. Had they not been at their prescribed post, they would have obtained no part whatever in the promised privilege; and in like manner we, with every sentiment of dependence on the power of the Spirit, should, both for ourselves and others, do those things in the doing of which alone we have reason to expect that he will come down with all that energy of impression, and all that richness of gift and of endowment, which belong to him. The apostles were the human instruments for the dispensation of the Spirit in those days; and we cannot do better than to take our lesson from them, and observe what they had to do, that the Spirit of God, working along with them, might turn the hearts of men, and extend the proper kingdom of God over the proper ground which that kingdom has to occupy. They laid before those to whom they addressed themselves the word of God, and they prayed for the Spirit of God, that he might take hold of his own instrument, and make it bear with effect upon the consciences and the understandings of men. The lesson is a short one, but it comprises all that we have to do in the work of extending Christianity through the world. Be it on our own behalf, and with a view to bring down upon our own souls the benefits of the Gospel, and the best thing we can turn ourselves to is to read diligently the Bible, and to pray diligently for that Spirit, who pours the brilliancy of a warm and affecting light over all its pages. Be it on behalf of others, and with a view to secure to them the benefits of the Gospel, then, if they are immediately around us, the best



thing we can do is to ply them with the instructions of the Bible, and to pray for the coming down of that power which can alone give these instructions all their efficacy. Hence the stationary apparatus of a country where Christianity is established—consisting of schools, where the reading of the Bible is taught; and churches, where the meaning of the Bible is expounded; and official men, whose business it is to pray themselves, and to press the exercise of prayer on others, to that God who orders intercessions in behalf of all, because he willeth all to be saved. But should it be in behalf of men who live in a distant country—and the precept of “Go and preach the Gospel to every creature,” gives a legitimacy to the attempts of Christianizing them, which all the ridicule and all the wisdom of this world cannot overthrow—then the stationary apparatus becomes a moveable one; and the word of God, translated into other languages, and human messengers to carry that word and to expound it—and Christians abroad to spread around them the message of salvation, and Christians who stay at home praying to the God of all influence, and giving him no rest till he pour such a blessing on other lands that there shall be no room to receive it. This lays before us the godly apparatus, which we rejoice to observe is in growing operation among the men of the present day: and while Bible Societies, and Missionary Societies, and Praying Societies, have the full cry of ridicule discharged upon them by the men of the world—while the disgrace of an obscure and contemptible fanaticism is made to lie upon all these operations—while the affairs of temporal kingdoms,

and the fluctuations of their ever-veering politics, fill up the columns of every newspaper, and form the talk of every company—there are holy men now dealing with the hearts and the principles of the people in our own country, and of savages in distant lands; and amid all the noisy contempt and resistance they have gathered around them, with the sanction of apostolical example, and the persevering use of apostolical instruments, are they working their silent but effectual way to the magnificent result, and the final establishment of the kingdom of God in the world.

And thus it is, that men become themselves living temples of God, and that God's living temple, his spiritual kingdom, is extended and established throughout the world. And we cannot better reply to the question, What is the best instrument for promoting and extending the kingdom of God in the world? than by referring our readers to the following treatise of JOHN HOWE, "The Living Temple, or a Good Man the Temple of God." This treatise, which we have introduced to the notice of our readers is less known to the Christian public than some of the other productions of this celebrated author. It is not because that, either in itself or in its subject, it possesses less worth or less importance than those pieces of this author which are better, known and have acquired greater popularity—for in respect to both, it holds a high rank among the numerous and valuable productions of this much-admired writer. But we apprehend the reason of its not obtaining such general circulation arises from the circumstance of the main subject of the treatise

—the formation of God's Living Temple in the world—being intermingled with his lengthened and elaborate demonstrations of the existence of God—and from his profound and metaphysical controversies with Spinoza and the French infidels, respecting the uncreated Being, and the eternal self-existence of the Deity, extending through nearly half the original treatise. And, though we hold his profound and erudite exposure of atheism, to contain the most perfect and unanswerable demonstration of the existence of a God with which we are acquainted—yet the deep and metaphysical character of his argumentation, renders it too occult and abstruse to be easily apprehended by ordinary readers; and thus is it fitted to repel them from entering on a piece of superlative excellence. It was under this conviction, and to render the treatise more acceptable and useful to the Christian public, that we have divested the present edition of those elaborate disquisitions, into which he had been drawn by the French infidels, and which were extraneous to the specific design of the work, and have only presented our readers with what relates to the author's main subject—the method by which the reign of truth and holiness is established in the hearts of men, in order to their becoming temples of the Living God.

To those who desiderate a full and comprehensive exhibition of the Gospel scheme, for the restoration of our fallen and apostate race to the lost image and communion of the Godhead, we would recommend this invaluable treatise to their perusal. He gives a deeply affecting but justly descriptive representation of the apostacy, and consequent ruin and de-



pravity of man, in his melancholy but magnificent delineation of the ruined, desolate, and forsaken condition of that noble Living Temple, where God once dwelt, and which was once blessed and beautified by the Divine Presence. And he gives a no less powerful and scriptural representation of the wisdom and glory, of the plans and purposes, of the Divine Mind, for the rebuilding of this fallen and deserted temple by Emmanuel, that God might, in perfect consistency with the holiness and righteousness of his august government, again tabernacle with man—and that the love, and the loyalty, and the obedience which were due to heaven's great Monarch, might be re-established in the hearts of men, in order that they might again be restored to that blissful communion and intercourse with God which they had forfeited by their apostacy. And who can estimate the might and the magnitude of that great undertaking, by which Emmanuel achieved the restoration of this ruined temple? How the temple of his own body had to be destroyed, that by his sufferings and death he might expiate the guilt of an apostate world—and make reparation for the offence done to Heaven's righteous government—and effect a reconciliation between God and his alienated creatures—and obtain the communication of the Holy Spirit to renovate and adorn this desolated ruin, that the great Inhabitant might return and again occupy his long-deserted temple. It is because men are insensible to the extent of the ruin and the desolation which sin has effected, that they are so insensible to the greatness of that deliverance which the Saviour had to achieve for the restoration of man to the enjoyment of the Divine Presence.



To establish the reign of truth and holiness in the hearts of men, and thus to render them fit temples for the Divinity, is the grand and ultimate design of God in that wonderful dispensation which is revealed in the Gospel. Oh it is little thought of by men, in whose hearts the god of this world has established his reign, what a mighty change must be effected ere they become living temples of God! It is because they are so insensible to the nature and extent of the ruin, that they are so insensible to the magnitude of that change which they must undergo ere they become fit for the Divine residence. It is not a repair, but a rebuilding. It is not a reform, but a thorough regeneration. It is fearful to think of the delusion which prevails in the great mass of society respecting this mighty change. It is not merely the infidel and the practical atheist, to whom HOWE so well addresses the language of terror and alarm, that require to be awakened. When we think of the spiritless indifference, and cold irreligion, of many professors of Christianity—when we think of the lukewarm decencies, and heartless conformities, of many who profess their attachment to the Saviour—and compare them with that spirituality of mind, and renovation of heart, which this excellent author so well sets forth, as constituting the Living Temple, it may well alarm the consciences of many a decent and reputable professor of the Gospel. And it ought to reach conviction to the heart of many, whose complacency in their own state has never been disturbed, that, amidst the many earth-born qualities and endowments with which their character in society is adorned—while their hearts are devoted to earthli-

ness, and the world forms the object of their idolatrous affections—they are still unfit for the Divine residence, and are living without God in the world.

Now, it is the scriptural view of the magnitude of the change that is implied in becoming a Christian, which makes Christianity, in the entire sense of the term, so revolting both to the pride and the sagacity of nature. It looks so wild and impossible an enterprise to draw away the affections from that which appears to give life and motion to the whole of human industry. The demand appears so extravagant, when asked to renounce our liking for what all men like—and we appear to be pushing the exactions of religion so unreasonably far, when we represent it as incompatible with the love of wealth, or grandeur, or animal gratification—that, to the eye of many a cool and sober-minded citizen, it appears in the light of a very unlikely speculation. With the eye of a strong practical understanding, much and judiciously exercised in the realities of business, he regards the man of such lofty and spiritual lessons as a visionary altogether—but he shrewdly guesses that there is no danger of obtaining many real disciples to a system, so utterly at variance with the most urgent principles of the human constitution.

Now, to repel the contempt and also the apparent common sense of all this resistance, we might easily demonstrate, that without any mitigation whatever of the spirit of Christianity, the service of God would still remain a reasonable service. But we shall content ourselves with urging upon you one argument which the Bible furnishes, which is, that the world passeth away, and the lust thereof. There is a

result pointed to here, ye sage and calculating men, who are looking so intently forward to the result of your varied speculations. There is an event which is surely coming upon you all, and which will put to shame all the glory of secular wisdom, and hurry to a prostrate ruin all the might and magnificence of your groveling enterprises. In a few little years, and time will arbitrate this question. It will tell us who is the visionary—he who is wise for this world, or he who is wise for eternity. A day is coming, when the busy ambition of your lives will all be broken up—when death will smile, in ghastly contempt, over the vanity of earthly affections—when, summoning you away from this warm and comfortable dwelling-place, he will call your body to its grave, and your spirit to its reckoning—and upon the falling down of that screen which separates the two worlds, will it appear that the man who has sought his portion among the schemes, and the pursuits, and the passing shadows of our present state, was indeed the visionary. With this element of computation do we neutralize all the contempt which nature feels and nature expresses against the abstractions of a spiritual Christianity—and pronounce of him who disowns it, that he is indeed the blind and pitiable maniac, wasting himself upon trifles, and lost and bewildered among the frivolities of an idiot's dream.

On entering some busy place of commercial intercourse, and perceiving what it is that forms the ruling desire of every heart, and the ruling topic of every conversation—and feeling the resistless evidence that is before him, of the world being the resting-place of every individual, and its perishable objects forming all that



they long for, and all that they labour after—and, at the same time, observing what a face of respectable intelligence is thus lavished on the pursuits of earthliness—a Christian looker-on cannot but feel the strength of that discountenance which is thus laid on the views and the principles of spiritual men. The vast aggregate of mind and of example in the world appears to be against him; and he feels as if, left alone to his own visionary speculation, a gaze of universal contempt was directed against that peculiarity, in which he meets so few to share and to sympathise with him. But let him only look a little farther on, and this will both revive his confidence, and retort on the whole opposing species the very charge by which he was well nigh overwhelmed. In a few years, and all that is visible of the mass of life, and thought, and ambition, that is before him, will be a mouldering mass of dust and rottenness in the churchyard. There is evermore a rapid transference of that living crowd, one by one, from the place of business to the place of burial. In a few years, and the transference will be completed, and every one of these intense, and eager, and speculative beings, shall have disappeared from this busy scene, and shall have gone to share in the still more awfully interesting and important scenes of eternity.

T. C.

EDINBURGH, *June*, 1829.



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# THE LIVING TEMPLE.

## INTRODUCTION.

THIS Living Temple is quite of another constitution and make than that at Jerusalem, and “not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;” so what is requisite to the interest and service of it is much of another nature. Entire devotedness to God, sincerity, humility, charity, refinedness from the dross and baseness of the earth, strict sobriety, dominion of one’s self, mastery over impotent and ignominious passions, love of justice, a steady propension to do good, delight in doing it, have contributed more to the security and beauty of God’s temple on earth—conferred on it more majesty and lustre—done more to procure it room and reverence among men, than the most prosperous violence ever did: the building up of this temple, even to the laying on the top-stone, (to be followed with the acclamations of ‘Grace, Grace,’) being that which must be done, not by might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. Which, inasmuch as the structure is spiritual, and to be situated and raised up in the mind

or spirit of man, works, in order to it, in a way suitable there. That is, very much by soft and gentle insinuations, unto which are subservient the self-recommending amiableness and comely aspect of religion; the discernible gracefulness and uniform course of such in whom it bears rule, and is a settled living law. Hereby the hearts of others are captivated and won to look towards it: made not only desirous to taste its delights, but, in order thereto, patient also of its rigours, and the rougher severities which their drowsy security and unmortified lusts do require should accompany it: the more deeply and thoroughly to attemper and form them to it. Merely notional discourses about the temple of God, and the external forms belonging to it, being unaccompanied with the life and power to which they should be adjoined, either as subservient helps, or comely expressions thereof, do gain but little to it in the estimation of discerning men.

Much more have the apparently useless and unintelligible notions, with the empty formalities too arbitrarily affixed to it, by the unreformed part of the Christian world, even there exposed it to contempt, where the professed design had been to draw to it respect and veneration.

A temple that is the seat of serious, living religion, is the more venerable and the more extensive, the more defensible and the more worthy to be defended, by how much it is the less appropriate to this or that sect and sort of men, or distinguished by this or that affected, modifying form; that which, according to its primitive designation, may be hoped, and ought to be resort of all nations: which it is vain



to imagine any one, of this or that external form, not prescribed by God himself, can ever be; unless we should suppose it possible that one and the same human prince, or power, could ever come to govern the world. Such uniformity must certainly suppose such a universal monarchy as never was, and we easily apprehend can never be. Therefore, the belief that the Christian religion shall ever become the religion of the world, and the Christian church become the common universal temple of mankind; that “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and all nations flow to it;” (as, besides that, many other texts of holy Scripture do plainly speak;) and an intemperate contentious zeal for one external, human form of God’s temple on earth, are downright inconsistencies. That belief, and this zeal, must destroy one another; especially, that which makes particular temples engines to batter down each other, because they agree not in some human additions, though all may be charitably supposed to have somewhat of Divine life in them. Therefore we plainly see, that this universal, Christian, living temple must be formed and finished, not by human might or power, but by the Spirit of the living God—which Spirit, poured forth, shall instruct princes, and the potentates of the world, to receive and cherish among their subjects the great essentials of the Christian religion, and whatsoever is of plain divine revelation, wherein all may agree; rejecting, or leaving arbitrary, the little human additions about which there is so much disagreement.

And when these have become matter of strife, and filled the world with noise and clamour, through the

imperious violence of some, and the factious turbulence of others ; it hath made it look with a frightful aspect, and rendered the Divine presence, so represented, an undesired, dreadful thing. This may make that the language of fear with some which is of enmity with the most, “Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.”

Most of all, when a glorying in these things, and contention about them, are joined with gross immoralities ; either manifest impiety, sensual debaucheries, acts of open injustice, or the no less criminal evil of a proud, wrathful, ungovernable temper of spirit ; *this* hath made it a most hateful thing in the eyes of God and men, and turned that which should be the house of prayer unto all nations, into a den of robbers : hath cast the most opprobrious contumely upon him whom they would entitle the owner of it. That is, when men will steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, oppress the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow ; and yet cry, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord,” &c., it is as if they would make the world believe, that the holy God, the great lover and patron of purity and peace, had erected, on purpose, a house on earth, to be the common harbour and sanctuary of the vilest of men, the very pests of human society, and disturbers of mankind.

And if they were not the very worst, yet how absurd and senseless a thing were it, that he should be thought to appropriate a people to himself, have them solemnly baptized into his name, and trained up in a professed belief of those his more peculiar revelations, which are without the common notice of

the most; and in the use of certain external institutes, being yet content, that, in all things else, they be but just like the rest of the world.

Though he may be, for some time, patient of this indignity, and connive at such a state and posture of things, (as he did a great while towards the Jews of old,) yet, that this should be thought the top of his design, and the thing he lastly aimed at, and would acquiesce in, supposes such a notion of God, as than which worshipping a stock were not more foolish and impious, and professed atheism as rational and innocent.

This hath spoiled and slurred the glory of the Christian temple, the most august and magnificent the world hath; made the religion of Christians look like an empty vanity, and appear, for many ages, but as an external badge of civil distinction between them and another sort of men, that are only contending for enlarging of empire, and who shall grasp most power into their hands; both having also their sub-distinguishing marks besides, under which, too probably, divers of those who have adjoined themselves to the so differenced parties, furiously drive at the same design. And these zealously pretend for religion and the temple of God; when, in the meantime, it were a thing perfectly indifferent what religion or way they were of,—true or false, right or wrong, Paganish, Mahometan, Jewish, Christian, Popish, Protestant, Lutheran, Calvinistical, Episcopal, Presbyterial, Independent, &c.; supposing there be any of each of these denominations that place their religion in nothing else but a mere assent to the peculiar opinions, and an observation of the external formalities of their own



party; and that they never go farther, but remain finally alienated from the life of God, and utter strangers to the soul-refining, governing power of the true religion. Only, that their case is the worse the nearer they approach, in profession, to the truth.

And really, if we abstract from the design and end, the spirit and life, the tranquility and pleasure, of religion, one would heartily wonder what men can see in all the rest, for which they can think it worth the while to contend, to the disquieting themselves and the world. Nobody can believe they regard the authority of God, in this doctrine or institution, rather than another, who neglect and resist the substance and main scope of religion, recommended to them by the same authority. And as to the matters themselves, which will then remain to be disputed, we have first the distinguishing name; and if we run over all those before recited, is it a matter of that consequence, as to cut throats, and lay towns and countries desolate, only upon this quarrel, which of these hath the handsomer sound? The different rites of this or that way, to them who have no respect to the authority enjoining them, must, in themselves, signify as little. And for the peculiar opinions of one or another sect, it may be soberly said, that a very great part understand no more of the distinguishing principles of their own, than he that was yet to learn how many legs a sectary had. Only they have learned to pronounce the word which is the Shibboleth of their party, to follow the common cry, and run with the rest that have agreed to do so too.

But if they all understood the notions ever so well, which are most necessary to true religion itself; were



it not, in them, a strange frenzy, to contend with clubs and swords about a mere notion, which has no influence on their practice, and they intend never shall? If any should profess to be of opinion that a triangle is a figure that hath four corners, sober men would think it enough to say they were mad, but would let them quietly enjoy their humour, and never think it fit to levy armies against them, or embroil the world upon so slender a quarrel. And wherein can the notions belonging to religion be rationally of higher account with them who never purpose to make any use of them, and against which it is impossible for any to fight so mischievously by the most vehement, verbal opposition, as themselves do by their opposite practice, most directly assaulting and striking at even what is most principally fundamental to religion and the temple of God? Not that these great things are unworthy to be contended for. All that I mean is, what have these men to do with them? or how irrationally and inconsistently with themselves do they seem so concerned about them?

How deeply is it to be resented, that so few understand wherein the substance of true religion doth consist. I shall now take notice of men's very different apprehensions concerning the things necessary to be believed. But besides that, though some religious sentiments be most deeply natural to men, yet, in all times, there has been a too general mistake of the true design, and proportionably of the genuine principle of it. That is, it has not been understood as a thing designed to purify and refine men's spirits, to reconcile and join them to God, associate them with him, and make them finally blessed in him. But

only to avert or pacify his wrath, procure his favourable aspect on their secular affairs, how unjust soever, while, in the mean time, they have thought of nothing ~~less~~ than becoming like to him, acquainted with him, and happy in him. A reconciliation hath only been dreamed of on one side, namely, on his, not their own; on which they are not so much as inclined to any thing else, than the continuance of the former distance and disaffection.

Consonantly whereto, it is plainly to be seen, that the great principle which hath mostly animated religion in the world hath not been a generous love, but a basely servile fear and dread. Whence the custom of sacrificing hath so generally prevailed in the Pagan world. And it needs not be said in what part of the world the same engine hath had the same power with men, even since they obtained to be called Christian. Which, while it hath been of such force with them, who, notwithstanding, persisted in courses of the most profligate wickedness; whence could their religion, such as it was, proceed, save only from a dread of Divine revenge? What else could it design but the averting it, without even altering their own vile course?

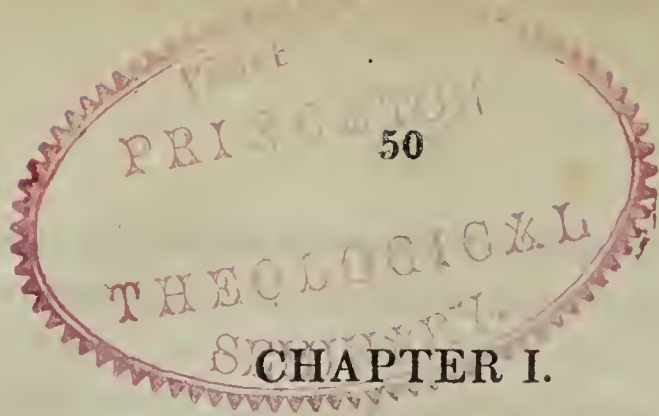
Now let this be the account and estimate of religion—only to propitiate the Deity towards flagitious men, still remaining so; and how monstrous a notion doth it give us of God, that he is one that by such things can ever be rendered favourable to such men. Let it not be so, how most despicably inept and foolish a thing doth it make religion! A compages and frame of merely scenical observances and actions, intended to no end at all.

In a word, their religion is nothing but foolery, which is not taken up and prosecuted with a sincere aim to the bettering of their spirits; the making them holy, peaceful, meek, humble, merciful, studious of doing good, and the composing them into temples, some way meet for the residence of the blessed God; with design and expectation to have his intimate, vital presence, settled and made permanent there.

The materials and preparation of which temple are no where entirely contained and directed, but in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: as, hereafter, we may with Divine assistance labour to evince. The greater is the ignominy done to the temple of God, and the Christian name, by only titular and nicknamed Christianity. Will they pretend themselves the temple of God, partakers in the high privilege and dignity of the Emmanuel, in whom most eminently the Deity inhabiteth, who are discernibly, to all that know them, as great strangers to God, and of a temper of spirit as disagreeing to him, of as worldly spirits, as unmortified passions, as proud, wrathful, vain-glorious, envious, morose, merciless, disinclined to do good, as any other men? When God cleanses his house, and purges his floor, where will these be found?

And for this temple itself, it is a structure whereto there is a concurrence of truth and holiness; the former letting in a vital, directive, formative light; the latter, a heavenly, calm, godlike frame of spirit.





*Atheists have made it more necessary to defend religion, and a temple in general, than this, or that mode of religion. Better defended by practice than argument.*

I. IT is so well known that this notion, ‘that a good man is the temple of God,’ hath long obtained in the world, that we need not quote sayings to avouch it; wherewith not only the sacred writings, but others, even of Pagans themselves, would plentifully furnish us.

But as authorities are, in a plain case, needless to unprejudiced minds; so will they be useless to the prejudiced, be the case ever so plain. Nor is any prejudice deeper, or more invincible, than that of profane minds against religion. With such, it would in the present argument signify little, to tell them what hath been said or thought before by any others. Not because it is their general course to be so very circumspect, as never to approve or assent to any thing, unless upon the clearest and most convincing demonstration; but from their peculiar dislike of those things only, that are of this special import and tendency. Discourse to them what you will of *a temple*, and it will be nauseous and unsavoury: not as being cross to their reason, but to their ill humour, and the disaffected temper of their mind; whence also, because they would fain have it so, they do what they can to believe *religion* nothing

else but the effect of timorous fancy, and *a temple*, consequently, one of the most idle impertinencies in the world.

To these, the discussion of the notion we have proposed to consider, will be thought a beating the air—an endeavour to give consistency to a shadow. And if their reason and power could as well serve their purpose as their anger and scorn, they would soon tear up the holy ground on which a temple is set, and wholly subvert the sacred frame.

I speak of such as deny the existence of the ever-blessed Deity; or, if they are not arrived at that express and formed misbelief, whose hearts are inclined, and ready to determine, even against their misgiven minds, that there is no God: who, if they cannot as yet believe, do wish there were none; and that so strongly, as in a great degree to prepare them for that belief: who would fain banish him, not only out of all their thoughts, but the world too; and to whom it is so far from being a grateful sound, that the tabernacle of God is with men on earth, that they grudge to allow him a place in heaven. At least, if they are willing to admit the existence of any God at all, do say to him, “Depart from us;” and would have him so confined to heaven, that he and they may have nothing to do with one another: and do therefore rack their impious wits to serve their hypothesis either way; that under its protection they may securely indulge themselves in a course, on which they find the apprehension of a God, interesting himself in human affairs, would have a very unfavourable and threatening aspect.

They are, therefore, constrained to take great

pains with themselves, to discipline their minds and understandings to that tameness and patience, as contentedly to suffer the razing out of their most natural impressions and sentiments. And they reckon they have arrived at a very heroical perfection, when they can pass a scoff upon any thing that carries the least signification with it of the fear of God; and can be able to laugh at the weak and squeamish folly of those softer and effeminate minds, that will trouble themselves with any thoughts or cares, how to please and propitiate *a Deity*: and doubt not but they have made all safe, and effectually done their business, when they have learned to put the ignominious titles of frenzy and folly upon devotion, in whatever dress or garb; to cry canting, to any serious mention of the name of God, and break a bold adventurous jest upon the most sacred mysteries, or decent and awful solemnities of religion.

II. These content not themselves to encounter this or that *sect*, but *mankind*; and reckon it too mean and inglorious an achievement to overturn one sort of temple or another, but would down with them all, even to the ground.

And they are bound, in reason and justice, to pardon the emulation which they provoke, of vying with them as to the universality of their design; and not to regret it, if they find there be any that think it their duty to waive a while serving the temple of this or that party, as less important to defend that *one* wherein all men have a common interest and concern, since matters are brought to that exigency, that it seems less necessary to contend about this or that *mode* of religion, as whether there ought to be



any at all. What was said of a former age, could never better agree to any than our own, "that none was ever more fruitful of religions, and more barren of religion or true piety." It concerns us to consider, whether the fertility of those many doth not as well cause as accompany a barrenness in this one. And since the iniquity of the world hath made that too suitable, which were otherwise unseemly in itself, to speak of a temple as a fortified place, whose own sacredness ought ever to have been its sufficient fortification, it is time to be aware, lest our forgetful heat and zeal, in the defence of this or that *out-work*, do expose the *main fortress* to assault and danger. For it hath long been by this mean, a neglected, forsaken thing; and is more decayed by vacancy and disuse, than it could ever have been by the most forcible battery; so as even to promise the rude assailant an easy victory. Who fears to insult over an empty, dispirited, dead religion? which, alive and shining in its native glory, (as that temple doth, which is compacted of lively stones united to the living corner-stone,) bears with it a magnificence and state that would check a profane look, and dazzle the presumptuous eye that durst venture to glance at its obliquely, or with disrespect. The temple of the living God, manifestly animated by his vital presence, would not only dismay opposition, but command veneration also; and be both its own ornament and defence. Nor can it be destitute of that presence, if we ourselves render it not inhospitable, and make not its proper inhabitant become a stranger at home. If we preserve in ourselves a capacity of the Divine presence, and keep the temple of God in a posture fit to receive him, he

would then no more forsake it, than the soul would a sound and healthy body, not violated in any vital part. But if he forsake it once, it then becomes an exposed and despised thing. And as the most impotent enemy can securely trample on the dead body of the greatest hero, that alive carried awfulness and terror in his looks; so is the weak-spirited atheist become as bold now, as he was willing before, to make rude attempts upon the temple of God, when HE hath been provoked to leave it, who is its life, strength, and glory.

✓ III. Therefore, as they who will not be treacherous to the interest of God and man, must own an obligation and necessity to apply themselves to the serious endeavour of restoring the life and honour of religion; so will the case itself be found to point out to us the proper course in order to it. That is, that it must rather be attempted by practice than by disputation; by contending, every one with himself, to excite the love of God in his own breast, rather than with the profane adversary to kindle his anger, more aiming to cherish the domestic, continual fire of God's temple and altar, than transmit a flame into the enemy's camp. For what can this signify? And it seldom fails to be the event of disputing against prejudice, (especially against the prepossession of a sensual profane temper, and a violent inclination and resolvedness to be wicked,) to beget more wrath than conviction, and sooner to incense the impatient wretch than enlighten him. And by how much the more cogent reasonings are used, and the less is left the confounded baffled creature to say, on behalf of a cause so equally deplorable and vile; the more he

finds himself concerned to fortify his obstinate will; to supply his want of reason with resolution; to find out the most expeditious ways of diverting from what he hath no mind to consider; and to entertain himself with the most stupifying pleasures, or whatsoever may most effectually serve to mortify any divine principle, and destroy all sense of God out of his soul.

And how grateful herein are the assistant raileries of servile, and it may be mercenary wits! How highly will he oblige them, that can furnish out a libel against religion, and help them with more artificial spite to blaspheme what they cannot disprove. And now shall the scurrilous pasquinade work a more effectual confutation of religion, than all the reason and argument in the world shall be able to countervail. This proves too often the unhappy issue of misapplying what is most excellent in its own kind and place, to improper and incapable subjects.

IV. And who sees not this to be the case with the modern atheist, who hath been pursued with that strength and vigour of argument, even in our days, that would have baffled persons of any other temper than their own into shame and silence? And no other support hath been left to irreligion, than a senseless stupidity, an obstinate resolvedness not to consider, a faculty to stifle an argument with a jest, to charm their reason by sensual softnesses into a dead sleep; with a strict and circumspect care that it may never awake into any exercise above the condition of dozed and half-witted persons; or if it do, by the next debauch presently to lay it fast again. So that the very principle fails in this sort of men, to which in reasoning, we should appeal and apply our-



selves. And it were almost the same thing, to offer arguments to the senseless images, or forsaken carcasses of men. It belongs to the grandeur of religion to neglect the impotent assaults of these men; as it is a piece of glory, and bespeaks a worthy person's right understanding, and just value of himself, to disdain the combat with an incompetent or a foiled enemy. It is becoming and seemly, that the grand, ancient, and received truth, which tends to and is the reason of the godly life, do sometimes keep state; and no more descend to perpetual, repeated janglings, with every scurrilous and impertinent trifler, than a great and redoubted prince would think it fit to dispute the rights of his crown with a drunken distracted fool, or a madman.

Men of atheistical persuasions, having abandoned their reason, need what will more powerfully strike their sense—storms and whirlwinds, flames and thunderbolts; things not so apt immediately to work upon their understanding as their fear, and that will astonish, that they may convince that the great God makes himself known by the judgments which he executes. Stripes are for the back of fools, as they are justly styled that say in their hearts, “There is no God.” But if it may be hoped any gentler method may prove effectual with any of them, we are rather to expect the good effect from the steady, uniform course of *their* actions and conversation, who profess reverence and devotedness to an eternal Being; and the correspondence of their *way*, to their avowed *principle*, that acts them on agreeably to itself, and may also arrest the sense of the beholder, and gradually invite and draw his observation; than

from the most severe and necessitating argumentation that exacts a sudden assent.

V. At least, in a matter of so clear and commanding evidence, reasoning many times looks like trifling; and out of a hearty concernedness and jealousy for the honour of religion, one would rather it should march on with an heroic neglect of bold and impertinent cavilers, and only demonstrate and recommend itself by its own vigorous, comely, coherent course, than make itself cheap by discussing at every turn its principles: as that philosopher who thought it the fittest way to confute the sophisms against motion, only by walking.

But we have nothing so important objected against practical religion, as well to deserve the name of such a sophism; jeers and sarcasms are the most weighty, convincing arguments: and let the deplorable crew mock on. There are those in the world, that will think they have reason enough to persist in the way of godliness; and that have already laid the foundation of that reverence which they bear to a Deity, more strongly than to be shaken and beaten off from it by a jest: and therefore will not think it necessary to have the principles of their religion vindicated afresh, every time they are called to the practice of it. For surely they would be religious upon very uncertain terms, that will think themselves concerned to suspend or discontinue their course, as often as they are encountered in it with a wry mouth or a distorted look; or that are apt to be put out of conceit with their religion by the laughter of a fool; or by their cavils and taunts against the rules and principles of it, whom only their own sensual temper, and impa-

tience of serious thoughts, have made willing to have them false. That any, indeed, should commence to be religious, and persist with blind zeal in this or that discriminating profession, without ever considering why they should do so, is unmanly and absurd; especially when a gross ignorance of the true reasons and grounds of religion shall be shadowed over with a pretended awe and scrupulousness to enquire about things *so sacred*; and an inquisitive temper shall have an ill character put upon it, as if *rational* and *profane* were words of the same signification. Or, as if reason and judgment were utterly execrated, and an unaccountable, enthusiastic fury, baptized and hallowed, were the only principle of religion. But when the matter hath already undergone a severe inquisition, and been searched to the bottom; when principles have been examined; when the strength and firmness of its deepest and most fundamental grounds have been tried, and an approving judgment been past in the case, and a resolution thereupon taken up of a suitable and correspondent practice; it were a vain and unwarrantable curiosity, after all this, to be perpetually perplexing one's easy path with new and suspicious researches into the most acknowledged things. Nor were this course a little prejudicial to the design of religion, the refining of our minds, and the fitting us for a happy eternity. For when shall that building be finished, the foundations whereof must be every day torn up anew, upon pretence of further caution, and for more diligent search? Or when will he reach his journey's end, that is continually vexed, and often occasioned to go back from whence he came, by causeless anxieties about his



way, and whether ever he began a right course or not?

Many go securely on in a course most ignominiously wicked and vile, without ever debating the matter with themselves, or enquiring if there be any rational principle to justify or bear them out. Much more may they, with a cheerful confidence, persist in their well-chosen way, that have once settled their resolutions about it upon firm and assured grounds and principles, without running over the same course of reasonings with themselves, in reference to each single devotional act; or thinking it necessary every time they are to pray, to have it proved to them that there is a God. But many of these do need excitement; and though they are not destitute of pious sentiments and inclinations, and have somewhat in them of the ancient foundations and frame of a temple, have yet, by neglect suffered it to grow into decay. It is therefore the principal intention of this discourse, not to assert the principles of religion against those with whom they have no place, but to propound what may some way tend to reinforce and strengthen them where they visibly languish; and awaken such as profess a devotedness to God, to the speedy and vigorous endeavour of repairing the ruins of his temple in their own breasts; that they may thence hold forth a visible representation of an indwelling Deity, in effects and actions of life worthy of such a presence, and render his enshrined glory transparent to the view and conviction of the irreligious and profane. Which hath more of hope in it, and is likely to be to better purpose, than disputing with those that more know how to jest than reason; and better understand the relishes

of meat and drink than the strength of an argument.

VI. But though it would be both an ungrateful and insignificant labour, and as talking to the wind, to discourse of religion with persons that have abjured all seriousness, and that cannot endure to think, and would be like fighting with a storm, to contend against the blasphemy and outrage of insolent mockers at whatever is sacred and divine; and were too much a debasing of religion, to retort sarcasms with men not capable of being talked with in any other than their own language: yet it wants neither its use nor pleasure, to the most composed minds, and that are most exempt from wavering herein, to view the frame of their religion, as it aptly and even naturally rises and grows up from its very foundations; and to contemplate its first principles, which they may, in the mean time, find no present cause or inclination to dispute. They will know how to consider its most fundamental grounds, not with doubt or suspicion, but with admiration and delight; and can, with a calm and silent pleasure, enjoy the repose and rest of a quiet and well-assured mind, rejoicing and contented to know for themselves, when others refuse to partake with them in this joy, and feel all firm and stable under them, upon which either the practice or the hopes of their religion do depend.

And there may be also many others of good and pious inclinations, that have never yet applied themselves to consider the principal and most fundamental grounds of religion, so as to be able to give any tolerable reason of them. For either the sluggishness of their own temper may have indisposed them

to any more painful and laborious exercise of their minds, and made them to be content with the easier course of taking every thing upon trust, and imitating the example of others; or they have been unhappily misinformed, that it consists not with the reverence due to religion to search into the grounds of it. Yea, and may have laid this for one of its main grounds, that no exercise of reason may have any place about it. Or, perhaps, having never tried, they apprehend a greater difficulty in coming to a clear and certain resolution herein, than indeed there is. Now, such need to be excited to set their own thoughts to work this way, and to be assisted herein. They should therefore consider who gave them the understandings which they fear to use. And can they use them to better purpose, or with more gratitude to him who made them intelligent, and not brute creatures, than in labouring to know that they may also, by a reasonable service, worship and adore their Maker? Are they not to use their very senses about the matters of religion? "For the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and Godhead, are clearly seen," &c. And their faith comes by hearing. But what! are these more sacred and divine, and more akin to religion, than their reason and judgment, without which also their sense can be of no use to them herein? Or is it the best way of making use of what God hath revealed of himself, by whatsoever means, not to understand what he hath revealed? It is most true, indeed, that when we once come clearly to be informed that God hath revealed this or that thing, we are then readily to subject, and not oppose, our feeble reasonings to his



plain revelation. And it were a most insolent and uncreaturely arrogance, to contend or not yield him the cause, though things have to us seemed otherwise. But it were as inexcusable negligence, not to make use of our understandings to the best advantage; that we may both know that such a revelation is divine, and what it signifies, after we know whence it is. And any one that considers, will soon see it were very unseasonable, at least, to allege the written, divine revelation, as the ground of his religion, till he have gone lower, and foreknown some things as preparatory and fundamental to the knowledge of this.

And because it is obvious to suppose how great an increase of strength and vigour pious minds may hence receive, how much it may animate them to the service of the temple, and contribute to their more cheerful progress in a religious course; it will therefore not be beside our present purpose, to consider awhile, not in the contentious way of brawling and captious disputation, but of calm and sober discourse, the more principal and lowermost grounds upon which the frame of religion rests, and to the supposition of which, the notion and use of any such thing as a temple in the world do owe ourselves.

## CHAPTER II.

*The two more principal grounds which a Temple supposes. First, The existence of God. Secondly, His conversableness with men.*

1. Now, the grounds more necessary to be laid down, and which are supposed in the most general notion of a temple, are especially these two:—The existence of God, and his conversableness with men. For no notion of a temple can more easily occur to any one's thoughts, or is more agreeable to common acceptation, than that it is a habitation wherein God is pleased to dwell among men.

Therefore, to the designation and use of it, or to the intention and exercise of religion, the belief of those two things is necessary,—“That God is; and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him;” as will appear when the manner and design of his abode with men shall be considered.

These are the grounds upon which the sacred frame of a temple ought to stand, and without which it must be acknowledged an unsupported airy fabric. And since it were vain to discourse what a temple is, or to what the notion of it may be applied, unless it be well resolved that there is any such thing—the strength and firmness of this its double ground, and of its pretensions, should be tried and searched.

First: For the existence of God, we need not labour much to show how constantly and generally it hath been acknowledged through the whole world;

it being so difficult to produce an uncontroverted instance of any that ever denied it in more ancient times. For, as for those whose names have been infamous amongst men upon that account, there hath been that said, that at least wants not probability for the clearing them of so foul an imputation. That is, that they were maliciously represented as having denied the existence of a Deity, because they impugned and derided the vulgar conceits and poetical fictions of those days, concerning the multitude and the ridiculous attributes of their imaginary deities. Of which sort Cicero mentions not a few; their being inflamed with anger, and mad with lust; their wars, fights, wounds; their hatreds, discords, &c., who though he speaks less favourably of some of these men, and mentions one as doubting whether there were any gods or no, (for which cause, his book, in the beginning whereof he had intimated that doubt, was publicly burned at Athens, and himself banished his country,) and two others as expressly denying them; yet the more generally decried patron of atheism, Epicurus, Velleius highly vindicates from this imputation, and says of him, that he was the first that took notice that even nature itself had impressed the notion of God upon the minds of all men; who also gives us these as his words: “What nation is there or sort of men that hath not, without teaching, a certain anticipation of the gods, which he calls a certain preventive, or fore-conceived information of a thing in the mind, without which nothing can be understood, or sought, or disputed of?” Unto which purpose Cicero elsewhere speaks; that there is no nation so barbarous,



no one of all men so savage, as that some apprehension of the gods hath not tintured his mind; that many do think indeed corruptly of them, which is the effect of vicious custom; but all do believe there is a divine power and nature. Nor hath men's talking and agreeing together effected this. It is not an opinion settled in men's minds by public constitutions and sanctions; but in every matter, the consent of all nations is to be reckoned a law of nature.

And whatever the apprehensions of those few were in this matter, yet so inconsiderable hath the dissent been, that as another most ingenious pagan author, Maximus Tyrius, writes, "In so great a contention and variety of opinions concerning what God is, you shall see the *law and reason* of every country to be *harmonious and one*; that there is one God, the King and Father of all; that the many are but the servants and *co-rulers unto God*; that herein the Greek and the barbarian say the same thing, the islander and the inhabitant of the continent, the wise and the foolish: go to the utmost bounds of the ocean, and you find God there. But if in all times there have been two or three, *an atheistical, vile, senseless sort of persons*, whose own eyes and ears deceive them, and who are maimed in their very soul, an irrational and sterile sort; yet, out of those you shall understand somewhat of God; for they know and confess him, whether they will or not."

Secondly: His conversableness with men, as well as his existence, is *first* implied in the use of a temple, and the exercise of religion, which have been so common, that it is the observation of that famed

moralist Plutarch, "That if one travel the world, it is possible to find cities without walls, without letters, without kings, without wealth, without coin, without schools and theatres. But a city without a temple, or that useth no worship, prayers, &c., no one ever saw." And he believes, a city may more easily be built *without a foundation or ground* to set it on, than any community of men to have or keep a consistency without religion.

And, *secondly*, it is no mean argument of the commonness of religion, that there have been some in the world that have accounted it the most constituent and distinguishing thing in human nature. So that Platonic Jew judgeth invocation "of God, with hope towards him, to be, if we will speak the truth, the only genuine property of man, and saith that only he who is actuated by such a hope is a man, and he that is destitute of this hope is no man;" preferring this account to the common definition, that he is a reasonable and mortal living creature. And yet he extends not reason to the inferior creatures: for he had expressly said above, "That they who have no hope towards God, have no part or share in the rational nature." And a noble person (Herbert) of our own, says, "that upon accurate search, religion and faith appear the only ultimate differences of man; whereof neither *divine perfection* is capable, nor *brutal imperfection*;" reason, in his account, descending low among the inferior creatures. But *these* agreeing more peculiarly to man, so universally, that he affirms, "There is no man well and entirely in his wits, that doth not worship some Deity." Who therefore accounted it a less absurdity

to admit such a thing as a rational beast, than an irreligious man. Now if these have taken notice of any instances that seemed to claim an exemption from this notion of man, they have rather thought fit to let them pass as an anomalous sort of creatures, reducible to no certain rank or order in the creation, than that any should be acknowledged of the society of men, that were found destitute of an inclination to worship the common Author of our beings. And according to this opinion, by whatsoever steps any should advance in the denial of a Deity, they should proceed by the same, to the abandoning their own humanity; and by saying there is no God, should proclaim themselves *no men*.

This discovers the commonness, not to say absolute universality of religion, in the observation of these persons, whom we must suppose no strangers to the world, in their own and former times. And if it afford any less ground for such an observation in our present time, we only see that as the world grows older it grows worse, and sinks into a deeper oblivion of its original, as it recedes farther from it.

II. And at least so much is gained by it to a temple, that unless some very plain and ungainsayable demonstration be brought against the grounds of it, no opposition fit to be regarded can ever be made to it. That is, none at all can possibly be made, but what shall proceed from the most *immodest* and *rash* confidence, animated and borne up only by a design of being most licentiously wicked, and of making the world become so. *Immodest* confidence it must be, for it is not a man, or a nation, or an age, that such have to oppose, but mankind; upon



which they shall cast, not some lighter reflection, but the vilest and most opprobrious contumely and scorn that can be imagined: that is, the imputation of so egregious folly and doatage, as all this while to have worshipped a shadow, as the Author of their being; and a figment, for their common Parent. And this not the ruder only, and uninquisitive vulgar, but the wisest and most considering persons in all times. Surely less than clear and pregnant demonstration (at least not wild, incoherent, self-confounding suppositions and surmises) will never be thought sufficient to justify the boldness of an attempt that shall carry this signification with it. And it will be a confidence equally *rash*, as immodest. For what can be the undertaker's hope, either of success or reward? Do they think it an easy enterprise, and that a few quirks of impertinent wit will serve the turn to baffle the Deity into nothing, and unteach the world religion, and raze out impressions renewed and transmitted through so many ages, and persuade the race of men to descend a peg lower, and believe they ought to live, and shall die, like the perishing beast? Or, do they expect to find men indifferent in a matter that concerns their common practice and hope, and wherein their zeal hath been wont to be such as that it hath obtained to be proverbial, to strive as for the very altars? And what should their reward be, when the natural tendency of their undertaking is to exclude themselves from the expectation of any reward in another world? And what will they expect in this, from those whose temples and altars they go about to subvert? Besides, if they be not hurried by a blind

impetuous rashness, they would consider their danger, and apprehend themselves concerned to strike very sure. For if there remain but the least possibility that the matter is otherwise, and that *the Being* doth exist, whose honour and worship they contend against, they must understand his favour to be of some concern to them; which they take but an ill course to entitle themselves to. Much more have they reason to be solicitous, when their horrid cause not only wants evidence, nor hath hitherto pretended to more than a bare possibility of truth on their side, but hath so clear, and as yet altogether unrefuted evidence lying against it, that quite takes away that very possibility, and all ground for that miserable languishing hope, that it could ever have afforded them. Therefore is it left also wholly unimaginable, what principle can animate their design, other than a sensual humour, impatient of restraints, or of any obligation to be sober, just, and honest, beyond what their own inclination, and much-mistaken interest or conveniency would lead them to.

By all which we have a sufficient measure of the persons from whom any opposition to religion can be expected, and how much their authority, their example, or their scorn, ought to signify with us. And that a more powerful opposition can never be made, our experience, both that hitherto it hath not been, and that it would have been if it could, might render us tolerably secure. For surely it may well be supposed, that in a world so many ages lost in wickedness, all imaginable trials would have been made to disburden it of religion; and somewhat that had been specious at least to that purpose, had been hit

upon, if the matter had been any way possible. And the more wicked the world hath been, so directly contrary and so continually assaulted a principle, not yet vanquished, appears the more plainly invincible. And that the assaults have been from the lusts of men, rather than their reason, shows the more evidently, that their reason hath only wanted a ground to work upon, which, if it could have been found, their lusts had certainly pressed it to their service in this warfare, and not have endured the molestation of continual checks and rebukes from it.

Nor need we yet to let our minds hang in suspense, or be in a dubious expectation, that possibly some or other great wit may arise, that shall perform some great thing in this matter, and discover the groundlessness and folly of religion, by plain and undeniable reasons that have not as yet been thought on; but betake ourselves to a stricter and closer consideration of our own grounds, which, if we can once find to be certainly true, we may be sure they are of eternal truth, and no possible contrivance or device can ever make them false.

III. Having therefore seen what *common consent* may contribute to the establishing of them jointly; we may now apply ourselves to consider and search into each of them severally and apart. Having still this mark in our eye, our own confirmation and excitation in reference to what is the proper work and business of a temple, religion and conversation with God: how little soever any endeavour in this kind may be apt to signify with the otherwise minded.

FIRST, And for the existence of God; that we may regularly and with evidence make it out to ourselves,



*that he is, or doth exist*, and may withall see what the belief of his existence will contribute towards the evincing of the reasonableness of erecting a temple to him, it is requisite, before we evince the several parts of some existent being, that we settle a true notion of him in our minds; or be at an agreement with ourselves, what it is we mean, or would have to be signified by the name of God: otherwise we know not what we seek, nor when we have found him.

And though we must beforehand professedly avow, that we take him to be such a one as we can never comprehend in our thoughts; that this knowledge is too excellent for us, or he is more excellent than we can perfectly know; yet it will be sufficient to guide us in our search after his existence, if we can give such a description, or assign such certain characters of his being, as will severally or together distinguish him from all things else. For then we shall be able to call him by his own name, and say, “This is God; whatever his being may contain more, or whatsoever other properties may belong to it, beyond what we can as yet compass in our present thoughts of him.

We therefore begin with God’s existence. For the evincing whereof we may be most assured, *First*, That there hath been somewhat or other from all eternity; or that, looking backward, somewhat of real being must be confessed eternal. Let such as have not been used to think of any thing more than what they could see with their eyes, and to whom reasoning only seems difficult, because they have not tried what they can do in it, but use their thoughts a little, and by moving them a few easy steps, they will

soon find themselves as sure of this, as that they see, or hear, or understand, or are any thing.

For being sure that something now is, you must then acknowledge, that certainly either something always was, and hath ever been, or been from all eternity; or else you must say, that some time nothing was; or that all being once was not. And so, since you find that something now is, that there was a time when any thing of being did *begin* to be, that is, that till that time there was nothing; but now, at that time, somewhat first began to be. For what can be plainer than that, if all being *some time* was not, and *now* some being is, every thing of being had a beginning? And thence it would follow, that some being, that is, the first that ever began to be, did of itself start up out of nothing, or made itself to be, when before nothing was.

But now, do you not plainly see that it is altogether impossible any thing should do so; that is, when it was as yet nothing, that it should make itself, or come into being of itself? For surely making itself is doing something. But can that which is nothing do any thing? Unto all doing there must be some doer. Wherefore, a thing must be, before it can do any thing; and therefore it would follow that it was before it was; or *was* and *was not*, was *something* and *nothing* at the same time. Yea, and it was diverse from itself. For a cause must be a distinct thing from that which is caused by it. Wherefore, it is most apparent that some being hath *ever* been, or did *never begin* to be.

Whence further it is also evident, *Secondly*, That some being was uncaused, or was ever of itself with-

out any cause. For what never was from another had never any cause, since nothing could be its own cause. And somewhat, as appears from what hath been said, never was from another. Or it may be plainly argued thus: that either some being was uncaused, or all being was caused. But if all being were caused, then some one at least was the cause of itself; which hath been already shown impossible. Therefore, the expression commonly used concerning the first being, that it was of itself, is only to be taken *negatively*; that is, that it was not of another, not *positively*, as if it did some time make itself. Or, what there is positive, signified by that form of speech, is only to be taken thus: that it was a being of that nature, as that it was impossible it should ever not have been; not that it did, ever of itself, step out of not being into being.

And now it is hence further evident, *Thirdly*, That some being is independent upon any other; that is, whereas it already appears that some being did never depend on any other, as a productive cause; or was not beholden to any other, that it might come into being. It is thereupon equally evident, that it is simply independent, or cannot be beholden to any for its continued being. For what did never need a productive cause, doth as little need a sustaining or conserving cause. And to make this more plain, either some being is independent, or all being is independent. But there is nothing without the compass of all being whereon it may depend. Wherefore, to say that all being doth depend, is to say it depends on nothing, that is, that it depends not. For, to depend on nothing, is not to depend. It is therefore a manifest



contradiction, to say that all being doth depend; against which it is no relief to say, that all beings do circularly depend on one another. For so, however, the whole circle or sphere of being should depend on nothing, or one at last depend on itself; which negatively taken, as before, is true, and the thing we contend for; that one, the common support of all the rest, depends not on any thing without itself.

Whence also it is plainly consequent, *Fourthly*, That such a being is necessary, or doth necessarily exist: that is, that it is of such a nature as that it could not or cannot but be. For what is in being neither by its own choice, or any other's, is necessarily. But what was not made by itself, nor by any other, it is manifest it neither depended on its own choice, nor any other's, that it is. And therefore its existence is not owing to choice at all, but to the necessity of its own nature. Wherefore it is always by a simple, absolute, natural necessity; being of such a nature, to which it is altogether repugnant, and impossible ever not to have been, or ever to cease from being. And now having gone thus far, and being assured that hitherto we feel the ground firm under us—that is, having gained a full certainty that there is an eternal, uncaused, independent, necessary being, and therefore actually and everlastingly existing—we may advance one step further;

And with equal assurance add, *Fifthly*, That this eternal, independent, uncaused, necessary being, is self-active; that is, not such as acts upon itself but that hath the power of acting upon other things, in and of itself, without deriving it from any other. Or at least that there is such a being as is eternal, un-

caused, &c., having the power of action in and of itself. For either such a being as hath been already evinced, is of itself active or inactive, or either hath the power of action of itself, or not. If we will say the latter, let it be considered what we say, and to what purpose we say it.

If any be so sullen as to say such a thing, let it be considered to what purpose they say it. Is it to exclude a necessary self-active being? But it can signify nothing to that purpose. For such a being they will be forced to acknowledge, let them do what they can notwithstanding. For why will they acknowledge any necessary being at all, that was ever of itself? Is it not because they cannot, otherwise, for their hearts, tell how it was ever possible that any thing at all could come into being? But finding that something is, they are compelled to acknowledge that something hath ever been, necessarily and of itself. No other account could be given how other things came to be. But what! doth it signify any thing towards the giving an account of the original of all other things, to suppose only an eternal, self-subsisting, *inactive* being? Did that cause other things to be? Will not their own breath choke them if they attempt to utter the self-contradicting words, an inactive cause, or author, of any thing! And do they not see they are as far from their mark; or do no more towards the assigning the original of all other things, by supposing an eternal, *inactive* being only, than if they supposed none at all? That which can *do nothing*, can no more be the productive cause of another than that which is *nothing*. Wherefore, by the same reason that hath

constrained us to acknowledge an eternal, uncaused, independent, ~~unnecessary~~ being, we are also unavoidably led to acknowledge this being to be self-active, or such as hath the power of action in and of itself; or that there is certainly such a being, that is the cause of all the things which our sense tells us are, besides, existent in the world.

And hence, since we can frame no notion of life which self-active power doth not, at least, comprehend, it is consequent, *Sixthly*, That this being is also originally vital, and the root of all vitality, such as hath life in or of itself, and from whence it is propagated to every other living thing. And so, as we plainly see that this sensible world did some time begin to be, it is also evident that it took its beginning from a being essentially vital and active, that had itself no beginning.

Nor can we make a difficulty to conclude, *Seventhly*, That this being is of vast and mighty power, when we consider and contemplate the vastness of the work performed by it; unto which we must, at least, judge this power to be proportionable. For when our eyes behold an effect exceeding the power of any cause which they can behold, our mind must step in and supply the defect of our feebler sense; so as to make a judgment that there is a cause we see not, equal to this effect. As when we behold a great and magnificent fabric, and entering in we see not the master, or any living thing (which was Cicero's observation in reference to this present purpose,) besides mice and weasels, we will not think that mice or weasels built it. Nor need we, in a matter so obvious, insist further. (But only, when our severer reason hath



made us confess, our further contemplation should make us admire a power which is at once both so apparent and so stupendous.)

We therefore add, *Eighthly*, That this being is wise and intelligent, as well as powerful; upon the very view of this world, it will appear so vast power was guided by equal wisdom in the framing of it. Though this is wont to be the principal labour in evincing the existence of a Deity, namely, the proving that this universe owes its rise to a wise and designing cause; yet the placing so much of their endeavour herein, seems, in great part, to have proceeded hence, that this hath been chosen for the great medium to prove that it had a cause diverse from itself. But if that once be done a shorter way, and it fully appear that this world is not itself a necessary being, having the power of all the action and motion to be found in it of itself; and it does most evidently thence also appear to have had a cause foreign to, or distinct from, itself; yet no place of doubt seems to remain, but that this was an *intelligent cause*, and that this world was the product of wisdom and counsel, and not of mere power alone. For what imagination can be more grossly absurd, than to suppose this orderly frame of things to have been the result of so mighty power, not accompanied or guided by wisdom and counsel? that is, that there is some being necessarily existent, of an essentially active nature, of inconceivably vast and mighty power, destitute of all understanding and knowledge, and consequently of any self-moderating principle, but acting always by the necessity of its own nature, and therefore to its very uttermost, that raised up all the

alterable matter of the universe out of nothing ; and by the utmost exertion of that ungoverned power, put all the parts and particles of that matter into a wild hurry of impetuous motion, by which they have been compacted and digested into particular beings, in that variety and order which we now behold. And surely to give this account of the world's original, is, as Cicero speaks, not to consider, but to cast lots what to say ; and were as mad a supposition "as if one should suppose the letters of the alphabet, formed in great numbers, and cast in any careless fashion together, and that of these, loosely shaken out upon the ground, *Ennius's Annals* should result, so as to be distinctly legible as now we see them." Nay, it were the supposition of a thing a thousand-fold more manifestly impossible.

That our purpose may yet be more fully served, and such a being evidenced to exist as we may with satisfaction esteem to merit a *temple* with us, and the *religion* of it, it is necessary, *Ninthly*, that we add somewhat concerning the *Divine goodness* ; for unto that eternal Being, whose existence we have hitherto asserted, goodness also cannot but appertain ; together with those his other attributes we have spoken of.

It is not needful here to be curious about the usual scholastical notions of goodness, or what it imports, as it is wont to be attributed to being in the general, what, as it belongs in a peculiar sense to intellectual beings, or what more special import it may have in reference to this. That which we at present chiefly intend by it is a propension to do good with delight, or most freely, without other in-

ducement than the agreeableness of it to his nature who doth it, and a certain complacency which is taken in so doing. The name of goodness is of a significancy large enough, even in the moral acceptation, to comprehend all other perfections or virtues that belong to, or may any way commend, the will of a free agent. These, therefore, we exclude not; and particularly, whatsoever is wont to be signified as attributable unto God, by the names of *holiness*, as a steady inclination to what is intellectually pure and comely, with an aversion to the contrary; *justice*, as that signifies an inclination to deal equally, which is included in the former, yet as more expressly denoting what is most proper to a governor over others, namely, a resolution not to let the transgression of laws, made for the preservation of common order, pass without due animadversion and punishment; *truth*, whose signification also may be wholly contained under those former more general terms, but more directly contains sincerity, unaptness to deceive, and constancy to one's word: for these may properly be styled good things in a moral sense; as many other things might, in another notion of goodness, which it belongs not to our present design to make mention of. But these are mentioned as more directly tending to represent to us an amiable object of religion.

In the mean time, what we principally intend is, That the Being whose existence we have been endeavouring to evince, is *good*, as that imports a ready inclination of will to communicate to others what may be good to them; creating first its own object, and then issuing forth to it, in acts of free benefi-



cence, suitable to the nature of every thing created by it. Which, though it be the primary or first thing carried in the notion of this goodness, yet because that inclination is not otherwise good than as it consists with holiness, justice, and truth, these therefore may be esteemed secondarily, at least, to belong to it, as inseparable qualifications thereof.

Wherefore it is not a merely natural and necessary emanation we here intend, that prevents any act or exercise of counsel or design; which would no way consist with the liberty of the divine will, and would make the Deity as well a necessary agent, as a necessary being; yea, and would therefore make all the creatures merely natural and necessary emanations, and so destroy the distinction of necessary and contingent beings; and, by consequence, bid fair to the making all things God.

All this is provided against, by our having first asserted the *wisdom* of that Being, whereunto we also attribute *goodness*; which guides all the issues of it, according to those measures or rules which the essential rectitude of the Divine will gives, or rather is, unto it: whereby also a foundation is laid of answering such cavils against the *Divine goodness*, as they are apt to raise to themselves, who are wont to magnify this attribtue to the suppression of others; which is, indeed, in the end, to magnify it to nothing. And such goodness needs no other demonstration than the visible instances and effects we have of it, in the creation and conservation of this world; and particularly, in his large, munificent bounty and kindness towards man, whereof his designing him for his temple and residence, will be a full and manifest proof.

And of all this, his own self-sufficient fullness leaves it impossible to us to imagine another reason than the delight he takes in dispensing his own free and large communications. Besides, that when we see some semblances and imitations of this goodness in the natures of some men, which we are sure are not nothing, they must needs proceed from something, and have some fountain and original, which can be no other than the common Cause and Author of all things,—in whom, therefore, this goodness doth firstly and most perfectly reside.

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### CHAPTER III.

*The second principal ground which a Temple supposes.  
God's conversableness with men. Reflections on the  
Atheistical temper.*

1. NOR is the thing here intended less necessary to a temple and religion, than what we have hitherto been discoursing of. For such a sort of deity as should shut up itself, and be reclused from all converse with men, would leave us as disfurnished of an object of religion, and would render a temple on earth as vain a thing as if there were none at all. It were a being not to be worshipped, nor with any propriety to be called God, more than an image or statue. We might, with as rational design, worship for a god what were scarce worthy to be called the shadow of a man, as dedicate temples to a wholly unconvertible deity. That is, to such a one as not

only *will not* vouchsafe to converse with men, but that *cannot* admit it; or whose nature were altogether incapable of such converse.

SECONDLY: We are therefore to enquire what is intended by God's conversableness with men. For that measure and latitude of sense must be allowed to the expression, as that it signifies both capacity and propension to such converse: that God is both by his nature capable of it, and hath a gracious inclination of will thereto. Yea, and we will add, that he is not only inclined to converse with men, but that he actually doth it. As we call him a conversable person that, upon all befitting occasions, doth freely converse with such as have any concern with him. It will indeed be necessary to distinguish God's converse with men, into that which he hath in common with *all men*, so as to sustain them in their beings, and some way influence their actions; and that which he more peculiarly hath with *good men*.

And though the consideration of the latter of these will belong to the discourse concerning his temple itself which he hath with and in them; yet it is the former only we have now to consider as presupposed thereto, and as the ground thereof; together with his gracious propension to the latter also.

As the great Apostle, in his discourse at Athens, lays the same ground for acquaintance with God, that he hath given to all breath and being and all things, and that he is near and ready, (whence they should therefore seek him, if haply they might feel after him, and find him out,) in order to further converse. And here our business will have the less in it of labour and difficulty: for that we shall have



little else to do, besides only the applying of principles already asserting to this purpose. From which principles it will appear, that he not only can, but that, in the former sense, he doth converse with men and is graciously inclined thereto in the latter. And yet because the former is more deeply fundamental, as whereon all depends, and that the act of it is not denied for any other reason than an imagined impossibility; that is, it is not said he doth not sustain and govern the world upon any other pretence but that he cannot, as being inconsistent with his nature and felicity. This we shall therefore more directly apply ourselves to evince—that his nature doth not disallow it, but necessarily includes an aptitude thereto.

Nor yet, though it may be a less laborious work than the former that we have despatched, is it altogether needless to deal somewhat more expressly in this matter; inasmuch as what opposition hath been made to religion in the world, hath, for the most part, been more expressly directed against this ground of it. I say more expressly; for, indeed, by plain and manifest consequence, it impugns that also of God's existence; that is, through this it strikes at the other. For surely that being is not God that cannot converse with men, supposing them such as what purely and peculiarly belongs to the nature of man would bespeak them. So that they who have imagined such a being, and been pleased to call it God, have at once said and unsaid the same thing. *That* deity was but a creature of their own fancy; and they have, by the same breath, blown up and blasted their own bubble, made it seem something

and signify nothing: have courted it into being, and rioted it again quite out of it. In their conceit, created it a god—in their practice, a mere nullity. And it equally served their turn, and as much favoured the design of being wicked, to acknowledge only a god they could imagine and disimagine at their own pleasure, as to have acknowledged none at all. It could do no prejudice to their affairs to admit of this fictitious deity, that they could make be what or where they pleased; that should affect ease and pleasure, and (lest his pleasures and theirs should interfere,) that they could confine to remote territories, and oblige to keep at an obedient and untroublesome distance. Nor, though no imagination could be more madly extravagant than that of a god no way concerned in the forming and governing of the world; and notwithstanding whom, men might take their liberty to do what they listed; yet hath not this wanted patronage, and even among them who have obtained to be esteemed philosophers.

That it may evidently be deduced from what hath been said, that he is such as can converse with men; that is, having proved—that there is an eternal, self-subsisting, independent, necessary Being, of so great activity, life, power, wisdom, and goodness, as to have been the Maker of this world: it therefore follows, that this great Creator can have influence upon the creatures he hath made, in a way suitable to their natures. It follows, I say, that he can thus have influence upon his creatures: for it is hence manifest that he hath; they depend on him, and are sustained by him; nor could more subsist by themselves, than they could make themselves, or of

themselves have sprung out of nothing. And if it were possible they could, being raised up into being, continue in being of themselves; yet since our present question is not concerning what they need, but what God can do; and our adversaries, in the present cause, do not, upon any other pretence, deny that he doth concern himself in the affairs of the universe, but that it consists not with his felicity; is it not plain that he can, with the same facility, continue the influence which he at first gave forth, and with as little prejudice to his felicity?

So much then of intercourse God could have with his creatures, as his continual communication of his influence to be received by them amounts to. And then man, not being excluded their number, must share in this possible privilege according to the capacity of his nature. And inasmuch as we have also proved more particularly concerning man, that he immediately owes the peculiar excellencies of his intelligent nature, as it is such, to God only; it is apparently consequent, that having formed this his more excellent creature, according to his own more express likeness, stamped it with the glorious characters of his living image, given it a nature suitable to his own, and thereby made it capable of rational and intelligent converse with him; he hath it ever in his power to maintain a continual converse with this creature, by agreeable communications, by letting in upon it the vital beams and influences of his own light and love, and receiving back the return of its grateful acknowledgments and praises. Wherein it is manifest he should do no greater thing than he hath done: for who sees not, that it is a matter of no



greater difficulty to converse with, than to make a reasonable creature? Or who would not be ashamed to deny, that he who hath been the only Author of the soul of man, and of the excellent powers and faculties belonging to it, can more easily sustain what he hath made, and converse with that his creature, suitably to the way wherein he hath made it capable of his converse? Whereto the consideration being added of his gracious nature, it is further evident, that he is not only able, but apt and ready to converse with men, in such a way as shall tend to the improving of their being to that blessedness whereof he hath made them naturally capable, if their own voluntary alienation and aversion to him do not obstruct the way of that intercourse. And even this were sufficient to give foundation to a temple, and both afford encouragement and infer an obligation to religion; although no other perfection had been, or could be, demonstrated of the Divine Being, than what is immediately to be collected from his works, and the things whereof he hath been the sole and most arbitrary Author. For what if no more were possible to be proved, have we not, even by this much, a representation of an object sufficiently worthy of our homage and adoration? He that could make and sustain such a world as this, how inexpressibly doth he surpass in greatness the most excellent of all moral creatures! to some or other of whom, upon some merely accidental dignifying circumstances, we justly esteem ourselves to owe a dutiful observance and subjection.

If he did not comprehend within his own Being simply all perfection; if there were many gods and

worlds besides, and he only the Creator and absolute Lord of our vortex; were not that enough to entitle him to all the obedience and service we could give him, and to enable him sufficiently to reward it, and render his presence and cherishing influences even infinitely covetable and desirable to us? Yea; if he were the only entire Author of our own particular being, how much more is that, than the partial, subordinate interest of a human parent, to whom nature itself urges and exacts a duty, the refusal whereof even barbarian ingenuity would abhor, yea, and brutal instinct condemn? How much greater and more absolute is the right which the parentage of our whole being challenges? If all that I am and have be for him, I cannot surely owe to him less than all.

That the necessary Being from whence we sprang, is also an absolutely and infinitely perfect Being—that necessary Being cannot be less perfect, than to include the entire and inexhaustible fullness of all being and perfection:—that therefore the God to whom this notion belongs, must consequently be every way sufficient to all, and be himself but one; the only Source and Fountain of all life and being; the common Basis and Support of the universe; the absolute Lord of this great creation, and the central Object of the common concurrent trust, fear, love, and other worship of his intelligent and reasonable creatures. And therefore there remains no greater or other difficulty, in apprehending how he can, without disturbance to himself, or interruption of his own felicity, intend all the concerns of his creatures, apply himself to them according to their several exi-

gencies, satisfy their desires and cravings, inspect and govern their actions and affairs; than we have to apprehend a Being absolutely and every way perfect.

You cannot surely doubt, but that he that made you, and gave you all that any way belongs to your being, can apply himself to you, or any of his creatures, in a way suitable to the natures which he hath put into you and them; nor that he is ready to converse with you, in a way suitable to the nature he hath given you, if you be such towards him, and so apply yourself to him, as you ought. For it is not a greater thing to do so, nor more exceeding or going beyond the reach of his power, wisdom, and goodness, as you cannot but see, than to have given being to you and all things.

A cloud and darkness are now drawn over the world of mankind; and though it be still very easily discernible that *God is*, it is yet more difficult to attain to so distinct apprehensions *what* he is, as are necessary to our conversing with him. Against this difficulty he hath afforded a gracious relief; that is, he hath provided there should be a more express discovery of him extant among men, than can be collected by their making observations upon this world. The case was such with man, grown now so great a stranger to God, as to require a written revelation of his nature and will; and we have it in those Scriptures which bear with us the name of the Word of God. It were indeed very unseasonable and absurd, to urge their authority in the inquiry, whether there be a God or not! For what authority have they more than other writings, but as they are God's word? There-



fore, to expect or give assent to them as such, while yet it remains an undecided controversy, whether there be any such one or not, for whose sake the assent should be given, were to expose our religion, not to prove it. These holy writings were not intended, by their affirmation of it, to inform us of God's existence, which they suppose, and do not prove, as a thing we may otherwise be certain of; but to teach us our duty towards him, and what our expectations may be from him; and do therefore give us a true representation and discovery of his nature, and then next, of the present state of things between him and us, that we might be directed how to apply ourselves to him suitably to both the one and the other. It is true, that we can never know that there is a God, without knowing somewhat of his nature, or what a one he is. We cannot so much as enquire whether he be or not, but we must have some notion in our minds of the thing we enquire about; and so much as is necessary to this purpose may be plainly gathered in the way we have gone hitherto. For if we understand the difference between something and nothing, between being and no being, and find that something is, or that there is some being; and again, if we understand the difference between a thing's being of itself, and being of or from another, and find the former must be the original of the latter, we cannot but understand ourselves, when we say there is an Original Being. And having some understanding what is meant by power, wisdom, and goodness; withall finding that not only the effects of these, but these very things themselves, are in the world, we cannot but be sure (because these things come out of

nothing) that the Original Being is powerful, wise, and good. And now, when we have thus found out an Original Being, that is of wisdom, power, and goodness sufficient to be the author of such a world as this, we at once know both what God is, (sufficiently to distinguish him from all things else,) and are at a certainty that he is.

When we perceive that he hath given to all breath and being and all things; we have sought, and even felt and found him out, and found that he is not far from any one of us, since in him we live and move and have our being; that he is every where present, in this his creation, as the great Sustainer and the Life of the universe; and forasmuch especially as we are his offspring, (as even the light of a heathen poet could reach to discover,) even we, who are a sort of intelligent, designing, active beings, that therefore the Godhead is not like silver, or gold, &c., but of a nature more nearly resembling that of our own souls, and the higher excellencies of the best of his creatures, although eminently containing in himself also all the real perfections, virtues, and powers of all the rest: when we understand so much of God, (as we may by the light of our own reason,) we understand enough to give a foundation to religion, and to let us see he ought to have a temple and worship; and another sort of temple than is made by men's hands, other worship than can be performed by the hands of men; as is there clearly argued, and inferred by the Apostle, upon those plain grounds. Now, when we are arrived thus far, it is seasonable to make use of the further help which we may observe the great and wise and good

God to have most condescendingly, most aptly, and most mercifully afforded us, for our more distinct understanding of his nature, and our own state; and how we are to behave ourselves towards him thereupon.

Taking notice, therefore, that there is a written revelation of him extant in the world, that bears his name, and gives itself out to be from him; if now we look into it, observe the import and design of it, compare it with what we before knew of his nature and our own; consider what is most obvious to an easy self-reflection in our own state and case, and how exactly his written revelation agrees and corresponds to those our former notices; taking in withall the many considerations that concur besides, to evdience to us the divine original and authority thereof: we cannot but have much rational inducement and obligation to receive, with all reverence and gratitude, this revelation as from God—and to rely upon it, as a sure and sacred light sent down from heaven, to direct us in all our concerns Godward. For finding our own great need of such an additional light, and apprehending it sufficiently agreeable to the divine goodness to afford it, and expecting it to be such, in its scope and design, as we find it is: if we further consider it must have had some author, and perceiving it not easy, with any plausible pretence, to affix it to any other than God himself: if we consider that it was impossible it could be invented by men, without some design of self-advantage, either in this world or in the other: and how absurd any such expectation must be, either from men here or from God hereafter, who could not



be expected to reward forgery, falsehood, and the usurpation of his name!—If again, we further observe the positive attestations whereby he hath challenged and owned it as his own, and wherein the divine *power* hath borne witness to the divine *truth* contained in it; if the matters of fact on which all depends appear not less certain than that there were men and nations in the world, that we have not seen, and before we were born;—if we see it not only improbable, but even next to impossible, that the records of those miraculous attestations should have been forged, and nations imposed upon thereby; and amongst them, many of the wisest of men in those very times when the things recorded were alleged to have been done, and in a matter wherein their eternal hope was concerned—we shall, upon the whole, see cause to judge, that as it were most absurd to suppose such a revelation given by God, and no sufficient rational evidence withall given that it is from him, so that there is nothing awanting, in divine estimate itself, to make up such a sufficient, rational evidence; nor in our own, unless we would suppose it necessary that every man should have a bible reached him down by an immediate hand from heaven, or make some other supposition as fond and vain as that; or that we count not that sufficient evidence, which ought to satisfy our reason, if it do not gratify our fancy and curiosity too. It is not fit, here, to say more of the divine original of those holy writings, nor needful; so much being written already, with so great clearness, on that subject, by many. That, therefore, being out of question what you cannot reason out yourselves, or apprehend from the rea-

sonings of others, concerning God's nature tending to represent him worthy of a temple with you, and capable of receiving and rewarding your sincere and spiritual worship, fetch out from that divine volume; for you may be sure, though you cannot search him out unto perfection, he perfectly understands himself, and is certainly such as he there tells you he is: and he there reveals himself to be such as to whom the temple and worship we here intend cannot be doubted to be both due and grateful. Whatever might be otherwise matter of doubt, is, by his express discovery of himself, taken away.

If it were still a doubt, after all that hath been formerly said for the reasoning out of these things, whether the Deity be one only or manifold; whether the world had but one, or had not many makers; and so, whether there be no danger of misapplying our religion, or of mistaking the object of our worship—this word plainly tells us,

*First*, That there is but *one* God, the Father, of whom are all things, 1 Cor. viii, 6. That he is God, and there is none else, Isa. xlv, 21, 22. And that however there be three that bear witness in heaven, and the stamp of whose name is, in our baptism, distinctly and solemnly put upon us, Matt. xxviii, 1 John, v; yet without the unnecessary, punctual declaration how these are three, and how but one, it expressly tells us These three are one.

And if it be yet a doubt with us whether this one God be so absolutely and every way perfect as to be sufficient for us all; whether he can understand all our concerns, relieve us in all our necessities, hear our prayers, satisfy our desires, receive our acknow-

ledgments and thanksgivings, and take notice with what love and sincerity they are tendered unto him; or, if he can do for us according to our necessities and reasonable desires, whether we have any ground to believe that he will—this word of his plainly assures us,

*Secondly*, That he is God all-sufficient, Gen. xvii, 1; that he hath all fullness in him. It often represents him to us under the name of the Lord God Almighty; tells us that he can do every thing, and that he doth whatsoever it pleaseth him. It tells us his understanding is infinite, and particularly assures us that he searches the hearts of men and tries their reins; that they cannot think a thought, or speak a word, but he understands them afar off, and knows them altogether; that his eyes are upon all the ways of men; that he knows all things, and therefore knows if they love him.

And that we may be the more fully put out of doubt how easy it is to him to do so, we are assured,

*Thirdly*, That he is every where present; that he fills heaven and earth; that the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain him; that there is no going from his Spirit, or flying from his presence; that if one go up to heaven, he is there; lie down in hell, he is there; go to the uttermost part of the sea, yet there his hand shall lead, and his right hand hold them.

*Fourthly*: And that all doubt may vanish, concerning his will and gracious inclination, how expressly doth he make himself known by his name—namely, “That he is the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in



goodness and truth," &c. Exod. xxxiv, 7. And by the same blessed and inspired penman of a part of these holy writings, (the beloved disciple, who lay in the bosom of his only-begotten Son; who also is in the bosom of the Father, and hath declared him,) we are not only told that God is Light, whereby the knowledge, purity, simplicity, and glory of the divine Being are represented, but also, once and again, that God is love—that we might understand him as a Being not of more glorious excellency in himself, than of gracious propensions towards his creatures. And lest it should be thought, our meanness should exempt us, and put us beneath his regard, we are told, he taketh care for sparrows, he heareth the ravens when they cry; and generally, that the eyes of all wait upon him, and he gives them their meat in season, Psal. cxlv, (which even the brute creatures are emphatically said to seek of God) and that he opens his hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing, Psal. civ. And besides what he hath so expressly testified concerning his own nature, his favourable inclinations towards men might sufficiently be collected from that very nature which he hath given to man, considered in comparison and reference to his own: that he made him in his own image; and that he being the Father of spirits, hath placed a spirit in man, so agreeable to his own spiritual nature; and by his own inspiration given him that understanding, that the mind begotten corresponds, by its most natural frame and constitution, to the mind that begot *his own Eternal Mind*; and that if its own original be remembered, it turns itself towards him, seeks his acquaintance by an instinct he

hath himself implanted in it, and cannot rest untill he have such a temple erected in it, wherein both he and it may hold converse together. By all this, his aptness to that converse with men, which is imported in the notion of a temple, doth so far appear, that at least it is evident such converse cannot fail to ensue, supposing there were nothing in the way that might be a present obstruction thereto. And it will more appear, when we have considered (since there is somewhat that obstructs this converse) what he hath done to remove the obstruction, and how he hath provided that the intercourse may be restored, and his temple resettled with men, upon everlasting foundations.

And here it may perhaps prove worth our while to pause a little, and make some short *reflections* upon the atheistical temper and genius, so as therein to remark some few more obvious characters of atheism itself.

And such as have not been themselves seized by the infatuation, cannot but judge it, *first*, a most unreasonable thing, a perverse and cross-grained humour, that so oddly writhes and warps the mind of a man, as that it never makes any effort or offer at any thing against the Deity; but it therein doth (by a certain sort of serpentine involution and retortion) seem to design a quarrel with itself; that is, with his very reasoning power, and the operations thereof. So near indeed was the ancient alliance between God and man, (his own Son, his likeness and living image,) and consequently between reason and religion, that no man can ever be engaged in an opposition to God and his interest, but he must be equally so to himself and his own. And any one that takes notice

how the business is carried by an atheist, must think, in order to his becoming one, his first plot was upon himself; to assassinate his own intellectual faculty, by a sturdy resolution and violent imposing on himself, not to consider, or use his thoughts, but with a treacherous predetermination to the part resolved on beforehand. Otherwisc, it is hard to be imagined how it should ever have been possible, that so plain and evident proofs of a Deity as everywhere offer themselves to observation, even such as have been here proposed, could be overlooked.

For what could be more easy and obvious, than taking notice that there is somewhat in being, to conclude that somewhat must be of itself, from whence whatever is not so must have sprung—That, since there is somewhat effected or made, those effects have then had an active being for their cause; that since these effects are partly such as bear the manifest characters of wisdom and design upon them, and are partly, themselves, wise and designing; therefore, they must have had a wisely active and designing cause? So much would plainly conclude the sum of what we have been pleading for; and what can be plainer, or doth require a shorter turn of thought? At this easy expense might any one that had a disposition to use his understanding to such a purpose, save himself from being an atheist. And where is the flaw? What joint is not firm and strong in this little frame of discourse? which yet arrogates nothing to the contriver, for there is nothing in it worthy to be called contrivance; but things do themselves lie thus. And what hath been further said concerning the perfection and oneness of this cause of all things,



is what is likely would appear plain and natural to such as would allow themselves the leisure to look more narrowly into such things.

Atheism, therefore, seems to import a direct and open hostility against the most native, genuine, and facile dictates of common reason. And being so manifest an enemy to it, we cannot suppose it should be at all befriended by it: for reason will be always true and constant to itself, whatsoever false shows of it a bad cause doth sometimes put on; that having yet somewhat a more creditable name, and being of a little more reputation in the world, than plain downright madness and folly. And it will appear how little it is befriended by any thing that can justly bear that name, if we consider the pitiful shifts the atheist makes for his forlorn cause; and what infirm tottering supports the whole frame that atheism rests upon. For what is there to be said for their hypothesis, or against the existence of God, and the claims of religion? For it, there is directly nothing at all; only a possibility is alleged, things might be as they are, though God did not exist. And if this were barely possible, how little doth that signify? Where reason is not injuriously dealt with, it is permitted the liberty of balancing things equally, and of considering which scale hath most weight. And is he not perfectly blind that sees not what violence is done to free reason in this matter? Are there not thousands of things, not altogether impossible, which yet he would be concluded altogether out of his wits, that should profess to be of the opinion they are, or were actually so? And as to the present case, how easy and unexceptionable, how plain and intelligible,

• is the account that is given of the original of this world, and the things contained in it, by resolving all into a Deity, the author and maker of them? Whereas, the wild extravagant suppositions of atheists, if they were admitted possible, are the most unlikely that could be devised; and how desperate hazards the atheist runs upon this mere supposed possibility. But, besides, that pretended possibility plainly appears none at all. It is impossible any thing should spring up of itself out of nothing; that any thing that is alterable should have been necessarily of itself such as it now is; that what is of itself inactive should be the maker of other things; that the Author of all the wisdom in the world should be himself unwise. These cannot but be judged most absolute impossibilities to such as do not violence to their own minds, or with whom reason can be allowed any the least exercise. Wherefore, the atheistical spirit is most grossly unreasonable, in withholding assent, where the most ungainsayable reason plainly exacts it.

And are not the atheist's cavils as despicably silly against the Deity, and consequently religion? Who-soever shall consider their exceptions against some things in the notion of God, eternity, infinity, &c., which themselves, in the mean time, are forced to place elsewhere, will he not see they talk idly? And as for such other impeachments of his wisdom, justice, and goodness, as they take their ground for, from the state of affairs, in some respects, in this present world, how inconsiderable will they be to any one that bethinks himself with how perfect and generous a liberty this world was made, by one that needed it not; who had no design, nor could have inclination to a fond self-

indulgent glorying and vaunting of his own work ; who did it with the greatest facility, and by an easy unexpensive vouchsafement of his good pleasure ; not with an operose curiosity, studious to approve itself to the peevish eye of every froward *Momus*, or to the nauseous, squeamish gust of every sensual *Epicure*. And to such as shall not confine their mean thoughts to that very clod or ball of earth on which they live ; which, as it is a very small part, may, for aught we know, but be the worst or most abject part of God's creation, which is yet full of his goodness, and hath most manifest prints of his other excellencies besides ; or that shall not look upon the present state of things as the eternal state, but upon *this world* only as an anti-chamber to *another*, which shall abide in most unexceptionable perfection for ever—how fond and idle, I say, will all such cavils appear to one that shall but thus use his thoughts, and not think himself bound to measure his conceptions of God, by the uncertain, rash dictates of men born in the dark, and that talk at random ; nor shall affix any thing to him which plain reason doth not dictate, or which he doth not manifestly assume, or challenge to himself ? But, that because a straw lies in my way, I would attempt to overturn heaven and earth—what raging frenzy is this ?

Again, it is, *secondly*, a base abject temper, speaks a mind sunk and lost in carnality, and that, having dethroned and abjured reason, hath abandoned itself to the hurry of vile appetite, and sold its liberty and sovereignty for the insipid, gustless pleasures of sense : an unmanly thing—a degrading of one's self. (For, if there be no God, what am I ? A piece of



moving, thinking clay, whose ill-compacted parts will shortly fly asunder, and leave no other remains of me than what shall become the prey and triumph of worms!

It is, *thirdly*, a sad, mopish, disconsolate temper; cuts off and quite banishes all manly, rational joy; all that might spring from the contemplation of the Divine excellencies and glory, shining in the works of his hands. Atheism clothes the world in black, draws a dark and dusky cloud over all things; doth more to damp and stifle all relishes of intellectual pleasure, than it would of sensible to extinguish the sun. What is this world without God? How grateful an entertainment is it to a pious mind to behold his glory stamped on every creature, sparkling in every providence; and, by a firm and rational faith, to believe how all events are conspiring to bring about the most happy and blissful state of things! The atheist may make the most of this world; he knows no pleasure but what can be drawn out of its dry breasts, or found in its cold embraces, which yields as little satisfaction as he finds, whose arms, aiming to enclose a dear friend, do only clasp a stiff and clammy carcass. How uncomfortable a thing is it to him, that having neither power nor wit to order things to his own advantage or content, but finds himself liable to continual disappointments, and the re-encounter of many an unsuspected cross accident, hath none to repose on that is wiser and mightier than himself? But when he finds he cannot command his own affairs, to have the settled apprehension of an Almighty Ruler, that can with the greatest certainty do it for us the best way, and will, if we trust

him—how satisfying and peaceful a repose doth this yield! And how much the rather, as that filial, unsuspicious confidence and trust, which naturally tends to, and begets, that calm and quiet rest, is the very condition required on my part; and that the chief thing I have to do, to have my affairs brought to a good pass, is to commit them to his management; and my only care, to be careful in nothing. The atheist hath nothing to mitigate the greatness of this loss, but that he knows not what he loses; which is an allay that will serve but a little while. And when the most unsupportable, pressing miseries befall him, he must, in bitter agonies, groan out his wretched soul without hope, and sooner die under his burden than say, ‘Where is God my Maker?’ At the best, he exchanges all the pleasure and composure of mind which certainly accompany a dutiful, son-like trust, submission, and resignation of ourselves, and all our concerns, to the disposal of fatherly wisdom and love, for a sour and sullen succumbency to an irresistible fate or hard necessity, against which he sees it is vain to contend. So that at the best he only not rages, but tastes nothing of consolation; whereof his spirit is as incompatible as his desperate affairs are of redress. And if he have arrived to that measure of fortitude, as not to be much discomposed with the lighter crosses which he meets with in this short time of life, what a dreadful cross is it that he must die! How dismal a thing is a certain, never-to-be-avoided death! Against which, as atheism hath not surely the advantage of religion in giving protection, so it hath greatly the disadvantage in affording no relief. What would the joy

be worth in that hour, that arises from the hope of the glory to be revealed? And is the want of that the total sum of the atheist's misery at this hour? What heart can conceive the horror of that one thought, if darted in upon him at that time, (as it is strange and more sad if it be not,) 'What becomes now of me, if there prove to be a God?' Where are my mighty demonstrations upon which one may venture, and which may cut off all fear and danger of future calamity, in this dark unknown state I am going into? Shall I be the next hour nothing, or miserable? Or, if I had opportunity, shall I not have sufficient cause to proclaim, (as once one of the same fraternity did, by way of warning to a surviving companion,)—"A great and a terrible God! A great and a terrible God! A great and a terrible God!"

I only add, it is, *fourthly*, a most strangely mysterious and unaccountable temper; such as is hardly reducible to its proper causes: so that it would puzzle any man's inquiry to fine out or even give but probable conjectures, how so odd and preternatural a disaffection as atheism should ever come to have place in a human mind. It must be concluded a very complicated disease, and yet, when our thoughts have fastened upon several things that have an aspect that way, as none of them alone could infer it, so it is hard to imagine how all of them together should ever come to deprave reasonable nature to such a degree.

1. It is most astonishingly marvelous (though it is apparent this distemper hath its rise from an ill will) that any should so much as *will* that which the atheist hath obtained of himself to believe, or affect to be what he is.



The commonness of this vile disposition of will, doth but sorryly shift off the wonder, and only with those slight and trifling minds that have resigned the office of judging things to their senses, and have learned the easy way of waiving all inquiries about common things, or resolving the account into this only, that they are to be seen every day. But if we allowed ourselves to consider this matter soberly, we should soon find, that however it must plainly appear a very common plague upon the spirits of men (and universal till a cure be wrought) to say, by way of *wish*, ‘No God,’ or ‘I would there were none:’ yet, by the good leave of them who would thus easily excuse the thing, the commonness of this horrid evil doth so little diminish, that it increases the wonder. Things are more strange, as their causes are more hardly assignable. What should the reason be, that a being of so incomparable excellency, so amiable and alluring glory, purity, love, and goodness, is become undesirable and hateful to his own creatures! That such creatures, his more immediate, peculiar offspring, stamped with his likeness, the so vivid resemblances of his own spiritual, immortal nature, are become so wickedly unnatural towards their common and most indulgent Parent! What, to wish him dead! to envy life and being to him from whom they have received their own! It is as strange as it is without a cause. But they have offended him, are in a revolt, and sharply conscious of fearful demerits. And who would not wish to live, and to escape so unsupportable revenge? It is still strange we would ever offend such a one! Wherein were his laws unequal, his government grievous? But since we

have, this only is pertinent to be said by them that have no hope of forgiveness, that are left to despair of reconciliation.—Why do we sort ourselves with devils? we profess not to be such.

Yea, but we have no hope to be forgiven the sin we do not leave, nor power to leave the sin which now we love. This, instead of lessening, makes the wonder a miracle. / O wretched, forlorn creature! Wouldst thou have God out of being for this? the sustainer of the world! the common basis of all being! Dost thou know what thou sayest? Art thou not wishing thyself and all things into nothing? This, rather than humble thyself, and beg forgiveness! This, rather than become again a holy, pure, obedient creature, and again blessed in him, who first made thee so! It can never cease, I say, to be a wonder, we never ought to cease wondering, that ever this befell the nature of man, to be prone to *wish* such a thing, that there were no God!

But this is, it is true, the too common case; and if we will only have what is more a rarity go for a wonder, how amazing then is it,

2, That if any man *would*, even ever so fain, he never *can* make himself *believe* there is no God! and shape his horrid course according to that most horrid misbelief! By what fatal train of causes is this ever brought to pass? Into what can we devise to resolve it?

Why, such as have arrived to this pitch are much addicted to the pleasing of their senses; and this they make their business; so as that, for a long time, they have given themselves no leisure to mind objects of another nature—especially that should any

way tend to disturb them in their easy course—untill they are gradually fallen into a forgetful sleep, and the images of things are worn out with them, that had only more slightly touched their minds before. And being much used to go by the suggestions of sense, they believe not what they neither see nor feel.

This is somewhat, but does not reach the mark ; for there are many very great sensualists who never arrive hither, but firmly avow that they believe a Deity, whatever mistaken notion they have of him, by which they imagine to themselves impunity in their vicious course.

But these, it may be said, have so disaccustomed themselves to the exercise of their reason, that they have no disposition to use their thoughts about any thing above the sphere of sense ; and have contracted so dull and sluggish a temper, that they are no fitter to mind or employ themselves in any speculations that tend to beget in them the knowledge of God, than any man is for discourse or business when he is fast asleep.

So indeed, in reason, one would expect to find it ; but the case is so much otherwise, when we consider particular instances, that we are the more perplexed and entangled in this inquiry, by considering how agreeable it is that the matter should be thus, and observing that it proves, oftentimes, not to be so ; in-somuch that reason and experience seem herein not to agree, and hence we are put again upon new conjectures what the immediate cause of this strange malady should be. For did it proceed purely from a sluggish temper of mind, unapt to reasoning and



discourse; the more any were so, the more disposed they should be to atheism: whereas every one knows, that multitudes of persons of dull and slow minds to any thing of ratiocination, would rather you should burn their houses, than tell them they did not believe in God; and would presently tell you, it were pity he should live that should but intimate a doubt whether there were a God or not. Yea, and many, somewhat more intelligent, yet in this matter are shy of using their reason, and think it unsafe, if not profane, to go about to prove that there is a God, lest they should move a doubt, or seem hereby to make a question of it. And in the mean time, while they offer not at reasoning, they more meanly supply that want, after a sorry fashion, from their education, the tradition of their forefathers, common example, and the universal profession and practice of some religion round about them; and it may be, only take the matter for granted, because they never heard such a thing was ever doubted of or called in question in all their lives.

Whereas, on the other hand, they who incline to atheism are perhaps some of them the greatest pretenders to reason. They rely little upon authority of former times and ages, upon vulgar principles and maxims, but are vogue'd great masters of reason, diligent searchers into the mysteries of nature, and can philosophise beyond all imagination. But it is hoped it may be truly said, for the vindication of philosophy and them that profess it, that modern atheists have little of that to glory in; and that their chief endowments are only their skill to please their senses, and a faculty, with a pitiful sort of drollery,

to tincture their cups, and add a grace to their otherwise dull and flat conversation. Yet all this however being considered, there is here but little advance made to the finding out whence atheism should proceed. For, that want of reason should be thought the cause, what hath been already said seems to forbid. That many ignorant persons seem possessed with a great awe of a Deity, from which divers, more knowing, have delivered themselves. And yet neither doth the former signify any thing to the disrepute of religion. For truth is not the less true, for that some hold it they know not how or why. Nor doth the latter make to the reputation of atheism, inasmuch as men, otherwise rational, may sometimes learnedly date. But it confirms us that atheism is a strange thing, when its extraction and pedigree are so hardly found out; and it seems to be directly of the lineage, neither of knowledge nor ignorance, neither sound reason nor perfect doatage.

Nor doth it at all urge to say, And why may we not as well stand wondering whence the apprehension of a God, and an addictedness to religion should come, when we find them peculiar neither to the more knowing nor the more ignorant? For they are apparently and congruously enough to be derived from somewhat common to them both—the impression of a Deity, universally put upon the minds of all men, (which atheists have made a shift to raze out, or obliterate to that degree, as to render it illegible,) and that cultivated by the exercise of reason, in some, and in others, less capable of that help, somewhat confirmed by education, and the other accessories mentioned above.

3. Therefore is this matter still most mysteriously intricate, that there should be *one temper* and *persuasion*, agreeing to *two* so vastly different sorts of persons, while yet we are to seek for a cause (except what is most tremendous to think of) from whence it should proceed, that is common to them both. And here is, in short, the sum of the wonder, that any not appearing very grossly unreasonable in other matters, should, in so plain and important a case, be so beyond all expression absurd, that they without scruple are pleased to think like other men in matters that concern and relate to common practice, and wherein they might more colourably, and with less hazard, go out of the common road; and are here only so dangerously and madly extravagant. Theirs is therefore *a particular madness*; so much the stranger thing, because they whom it possesses do only, in this one case, put off themselves, and are like themselves and other men in all things else. If they reckoned it a glory to be singular, they might more plausibly profess it as a principle, that they are not bound to believe the existence of any secular ruler longer than they see him, and so subvert all policy and government; or pretend an exemption from all obligation to any act of justice, or to forbear the most injurious violence towards any man, because they are not infallibly certain any one they see is a human wight, and so abjure all morality, as they already have so great a part, than offer with so fearful hazard to assault the Deity, or go about to subvert the foundations of religion. Or, if they would get themselves glory by great adventures, or show themselves brave men by expressing a fearless contempt



of Divine power and justice; this fortitude is not human. These are without the compass of its object; as inundations, earthquakes, &c., are said to be; to which, that any one should fearlessly expose himself, can bring no profit to others, nor therefore glory to him.

In all this discourse, the design hath not been to fix upon any true cause of atheism, but to represent it a strange thing; and an atheist, a prodigy, a monster, amongst mankind; a dreadful spectacle, forsaken of the common aids afforded to other men; hung up in chains to warn others, and let them see what a horrid creature man may make himself by voluntary aversion from God that made him.

In the mean time, they upon whom this dreadful plague is not fallen, may plainly see before them the object of that worship which is imported by a temple—an existing Deity, a God to be worshipped.

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## CHAPTER IV.

*Man's Apostacy from God, and the vitiated state of his nature. The temple of God hereby made waste and desolate, and become unfit for the Divine Presence.*

1. BUT so far it is, that there should want probability of a very inward commerce between God and man, that we have reason to think it rather strange, considering his nature and our own, it should not

have been continual; and that his unbounded and self-communicative fullness was not by him always afforded, and always imbibed and drawn in by so capable and indigent a creature. One would wonder what should have discontinued this intercourse! What can be so apt to give and flow out as fullness? What should be so apt to receive and take in as want and emptiness? Such a commerce, then, as can be supposed between one that is rich and full, and them that are poor and necessitous, one would think should have never failed. We are therefore put upon a new inquiry, and need no longer spend ourselves in anxious thoughts, Can there be any converse between God and men? That we may rather say, How can it not be? or, How strange is it there is not more—that he hath not a temple in every human breast, replenished with his vital presence—that there are nothing but ruins and desolation to be found, where one would expect a fabric worthy of God, and an indwelling Deity! This must, therefore, be the sad subject of our thoughts a while, What hath rendered the blessed God so much a stranger on earth, and occasioned him in so great part to forsake his terrestrial dwelling? Whence we shall have the advantage (seeing how just cause there was, on his part, for this deplorable distance) to adore the grace that returns him to us, and inclined him to take that strange course, which we find he did, to repair his forlorn temple, and fill this desolate forsaken world with the joyful sound of those glad tidings, “The tabernacle of God is with men.” We shall find he is no further a stranger in this world, than as we have made and continued him so: no further a home-dweller in it, than as by an

admirable contrivance of wisdom and love, which will be the eternal wonder of the other world, he hath made way for himself: whereby his propensions towards men, prevailing against so great an obstruction, do even now appear at once both evident and marvelous, and ought to be not only the matter of our belief, but admiration.

II. Wherefore, our discourse must here proceed by these steps, to show,—That mankind hath universally revolted, and been in a state of apostacy from God;—that hereby the temple of God in man hath been generally made waste and desolate;—and that he hath laid both the new foundations and the platform of his present temple in Emmanuel, God with us, his own incarnate Son, who rebuilds, beautifies, furnishes, inhabits it, and orders all the concerns of it.

*First*, Mankind hath universally revolted, and been in a state of apostacy from God. This we do little need to labour in: every man's own reflection upon the vitiated powers of his own soul would soon, as to himself, put the matter out of doubt; whence each one's testimony concerning his own case would amount to a universal testimony. No man that takes a view of his own dark and blinded mind, his slow and dull apprehension, his uncertain staggering judgment, roving conjectures, feeble and mistaken reasonings about matters that concern him most; ill inclinations, propension to what is unlawful to him and destructive, aversion to his truest interest and best good, irresolution, drowsy sloth, exorbitant and ravenous appetites and desires, impotent and self-vexing passions—can think human nature, in him, is in its primitive integrity, and so pure as when it first issued from its high



and most pure original. By such reflection every man may perceive his own ill case, in these and many more such respects ; and by observing the complaints of the most serious, and such as have seemed most to study themselves, collect that it is generally so with others also.

1. They that have read the sacred volume, cannot be ignorant that all flesh have corrupted their way ; that the great God, looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God, hath only the unpleasing prospect before his eyes even of a universal depravation and defection ; that every one of them is gone back ; they are altogether become filthy ; there is none that doeth good, no, not one ; that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ; that this world lieth in wickedness : and that this was not the first state of man, but that he is degenerated into it from a former and better state ; that “ God made him upright,” but that he is become otherwise by his own “ many inventions ;” that by trying conclusions to better a state already truly good, he brought himself into this woful plight ; and, by aiming at somewhat above, sunk so far beneath himself into that gulf of impurity and misery, that is now become to him as his own element and natural state.

2. Yea, and the matter hath that evidence, that even many of them who, for aught we know, never conversed with those sacred records, have no less clearly discovered their sense of the present evil state of man, than their ignorance of the original of that evil, though some of them carefully acquit God of it. (*Max. Tyr. Diss.* 25.) We find their complaints of

*the malignity of ignorance* surrounding all the earth, and that corrupts the soul shut up in the body: that, as a garment and web, inwarps the minds of men, that they cannot look to Him whose pleasure it is to be known, and who is not to be heard with ears, nor seen with eyes, or expressed by words. That till it be rent in pieces, they have upon them *the bond of corruption*, the dark coverture, the living death, the sensible carcass, a moving sepulchre, which they carry about with them.

And even from hence that virtue is voluntary, vice is, by another, concluded to be involuntary. “For,” says that author, “who can willingly, in the most lovely and most noble part of himself, choose that which is the greatest of all evils?” esteeming vicious inclination the most repugnant thing to liberty, and the greatest slavery. Whereupon, another enquiring, since God doth nothing but what is good, whence evils should come, resolves that whatsoever is good is from heaven, but all evil from our *self-natural vileness*. And another speaks of an evil adhering to our being, and not only acquired, but “even connatural to us; yea, and this evil is said to be the very death of the soul.” The sadness of the common case of man in this respect hath been therefore emblematically represented by “a potion of error and ignorance, presented to every one at their first coming into the world, and whereof it is said all do drink more or less.” And hence are “bitter complaints and accusations poured forth even against nature itself, as being a mere force and war, and having nothing pure or sincere in it,” but having its course amidst many unrighteous passions; yea, and its rise

and first production are lamented, as founded in unrighteousness. The discontentful resentments whereof have made some not spare to censure our very make and frame, the uniting “of an immortal thing to a mortal” in the composition of man, as a kind of distortion of nature, that the thing produced should be made to delight in having parts so unnaturally pulled and drawn together.

So that some of the ethnic philosophers have been so far from denying a corruption and depravation of nature in man, that they have overstrained the matter, and thought vicious inclination more deeply natural than indeed it is; and so taxed and blamed nature, in the case of man, as to be too liable to implied reflections even on the blessed Author of nature himself. Whereto the known principles of the sect of the Stoics do too plainly tend, who give in so vast a catalogue of the diseases and distempers of the mind of man: taking every thing into the account that hath the least of perturbation in it, without excepting so much as mercy itself, or pity towards them that suffer unjustly; and yet seem to subject all things to fate and natural necessity, whereby all these evils in the mind of man would be rejected upon the holy God, as their original cause. Whence, therefore, some that were more sober have made it their business to vindicate God from so horrid an imputation; and one of much note animadvertes upon the mistakes of such as seemed so to charge him, sharply blaming them for such an intimation: but more sharply for the excuse they give for it, namely, that God doth what they attribute to him in this matter for the punishment of wicked men; alleging it were a grievous mat-



ter that God should will and revenge the same thing, that wickedness should both be, and be punished, according to the mind of God. Some do, with great reverence of the Divine majesty, confess the rise of all this evil to be from man himself; namely, even that sort of evil which is called by the name of wickedness, is said to be from an innate principle, which the arbitrary power of a man's own soul hatcheth and fosters, and the fault is his who admits it; but God is faultless: that God did place the soul over a terrene body, as a charioteer over a chariot, which it might govern or neglect, &c.

They of this famous sect, the Platonists, seem often to attribute vicious inclination to the soul's being united with the body, (as supposing it to have existed pure and sinless before); yet even they appear also not to have thought it impossible a human soul should sometime have been in an earthly body without sin. For their renowned leader discourses at large of a former incorrupt state of man in the body, (a golden age, as others also call it,) and of a defection or apostacy from it; which state, though his Egyptian tradition misinformed him about the continuance of it, he excellently describes: telling us, that "then God familiarly conversed with men, taking care of them, as a shepherd of his flock; that he was chiefly intent upon the ducture and government of their minds; that, while the godlike nature continued in sufficient vigour with them, they were obedient to laws, and behaved themselves friendly towards that divine thing that was akin to them. Then they possessed thoughts that were true, and altogether great; using meekness and prudence in

reference to their own conditions and one another : that they disregarded all things in comparison of virtue. They easily bore a prosperous condition. esteeming all outward things little. They were not intoxicated or drunken with sensual delights ; but sober and quick-sighted, and all things increased upon them through their mutual love and virtue. But they growing at length into a too great esteem and love of terrene things, and that participation which they had of God decaying, (whereas all was well while the Divine Nature remained with them,) and being variously intermingled with much deadly evil, and a kind of human custom or course of living prevailing among them, and they not able to bear a prosperous condition, came to shame and to ruin with it ; having lost the loveliest of their most precious things.”

Agreeably whereto, another, discoursing of the nature and original of evil, places it in our being plunged and sunk into matter and corporeity ; and, commenting upon a noted passage of his master—namely, “that our recovery must be by a speedy flight to God,” &c.—says, that “this flight is not to depart from the earth, but that we become, even while we are on earth, righteous and holy and wise.”

Therefore also have we, with this sort of men, so frequent discourses of the purgative virtues, which suppose a lapse into great impurities ; yet not so inseparable from our natures, but that by Divine help a cure and redress may be wrought.

Nor, if we consider, can it be so much as imaginable to us, that the present state of man is his primitive state, or that he is now such as he was at first made. For neither is it conceivable the blessed

God should have made a creature with an aversion to the only important ends whereof it is naturally capable; nor, particularly, that he created man with a disaffection to himself, or that ever he at first designed a being of so high excellency as the spirit of man, to drudge so meanly, and be so basely servile to terrene inclinations; or, that since there are manifestly power in him of a superior and inferior sort and order, the meaner should have been, by original institution, framed to command, and the more noble and excellent only to obey and serve, as now every one that observes may see is the common case with man. And how far he is swerved from what he was is easily conjecturable, by comparing him with the measures which show what he should be. For it cannot be conceived for what end laws were ever given him, if, at least, we allow them not the measures of his primitive capacity, or deny him ever to have been in a possibility to obey. Could they be intended for his government, if conformity to them were against or above his nature? or were they only for his condemnation? or for that, if he was never capable of obeying them? How inconsistent were it with the goodness of the blessed God, that the condemnation of his creatures should be the first design of his giving them laws; and, with his justice, to make his laws the rule of punishment, to whom they could never be the rule of obedience and duty; or, with his wisdom, to frame a system and body of laws that should never serve for either purpose, and so be, upon the whole, useful for nothing? The common reason of mankind teacheth us to estimate the wisdom and equity of lawgivers, by the suitable-



ness of their constitutions to the genius and temper of the people for whom they are made ; and we commonly reckon nothing can more slur and expose government, than the imposing of constitutions most probably impracticable, and which are never likely to obtain. How much more incongruous must it be esteemed to enjoin such as never possibly could ! Prudent legislators, and studious of the common good, would be shy to impose upon men under their power, laws against their genius and common usages, neither alterable easily, nor to any advantage. Much more absurd were it, with great solemnity and weighty sanctions, to enact status for brute creatures ! And wherein were it more to purpose, to prescribe to men strict rules of piety and virtue, than to beasts or trees, if the former had not been capable of observing them, as the latter were not ? We insist not on the written precepts in the sacred volume, but let the law be considered which is written in men's hearts ; or the *lex nata*, which the eternal law-giving mind hath created in our souls. And how evidently doth that law convince, that we neither are nor do what we should ! How gross and numerous deformities do we daily behold by that shattered and broken glass !—how many things which we disapprove, or certainly would, if we discussed the matter with ourselves ! How frequent buffetings are many, when they reflect, constrained to suffer at their own hands, even wherein they are only “a law to themselves,” and have only their own thoughts either their excusers or accusers ! And what doth that signify but a lapse and recess from their original state ? The broken imperfect memorials whereof are a

standing testimony against their present course their notions of right and wrong, comely and uncomely, remonstrating against their vicious inclinations and ways. For would they ever reprove themselves for what was not possible to be otherwise? Or was man created a mere piece of self-contradiction, or with a nature made up of repugnancies, and perpetually at war with itself? This I should do, but that which is clean contrary I have a mind to. Were these ever like to be impressions both signed upon him by the same hand? Nothing is plainer, therefore, than that he is corrupted from his primitive integrity, and become a depraved and a degenerate thing.

*Secondly*: We go on, then, in the next place, to show—That by this degeneracy, the temple of the living God among men became waste and desolate; namely, both uninhabitable or unfit for his blessed presence, and, thereupon, deserted and forsaken of it. And we shall therefore treat, 1. Of the unfitness of man, in his state of apostacy, to entertain the divine presence, or be any longer God's temple; and 2. Of the blessed God's absenting himself, and estrangement from him hereupon.

1. That the spirit of man, by his having apostatized, became unfit to answer the purposes of a temple, will too plainly appear by considering the nature of that apostacy; which, what was it but a severing himself from God? Not in respect of place, but the temper of his mind and spirit; or, not by a local removal, but by unsuitableness and disaffection, departing in heart from the living God. It is true, indeed, that by this revolt, he became indisposed to

all other converse which belonged to him as a creature intelligent and virtuous, but chiefly to divine; the blessed God being the chief term of this defec-tion and revolt. For man, by his original rectitude, was principally determined towards God; and, by the same due bent and frame of spirit by which he stood rightly postured towards him, he was in a right disposition to every thing besides wherewith he had any concern. And, adhering to him as his centre and prime object, he kept his due order to-wards all other things; whence, by forcing and re-laxing the bonds that held him united to God, and by changing his posture towards him, he came to stand right no way. Turning to him the back, and not the face, all things are inverted to him. He is now become most directly opposite to God, and un-duly disposed towards other things, only by means of that opposition. As, then, he is unfit for every other good use, so most of all for that of a temple; and that upon both the above-mentioned accounts, as being first unsuitable to the blessed God, and then thereupon disaffected.

(1.) Man was become most *unsuitable* to him; the Divine image being now defaced and torn down. We speak not now of the natural image of God in man, or the representation the soul of man hath of its Maker in the spiritual, intelligent, vital, and im-mortal nature thereof, which image, we know, can-not be lost; but its resemblance of him in the excel-lencies which appear to be lost, and which were his duty, and could not be lost but by his own great de-fault. And those are both such as wherein the soul of man did imitate and resemble God, as knowledge,



purity, justice, benignity, &c., and such as wherein, though it could not imitate him, yet was to bear itself correspondently towards him; as he being the absolute Sovereign, to be subject to him, obey and serve him; and he, being the all-sufficient Good, to trust in him, depend upon him, know, love, and delight in him, unite with him, and expect blessedness only in and from him. How unlike and disagreeable to God, in all these respects, is apostate man! That whereas the notion given us of God is, that he is light, and with him is no darkness at all; it is said of such as have been involved in the common apostacy, in reference to their former state, “Ye were darkness;” as if that were the fittest and truest account that could be given of this revolted creature: not that he is in darkness, or there is much darkness in him, but “He is darkness.” He and darkness may define one another—that is he, and he is that. A dismal horrid cloud hath enwrapped his soul, that resists and yields not easily to the most piercing beams—excludes light wheresoever it would insinuate itself. This hath made the soul of man a most unmeet receptacle for the Divine presence, and more like a dungeon than a temple. And as he is now sunk into carnality, and a low, abject, earthly spirit, how unfit is he for Divine converse! How unapt to savour the things of God! How unlike the Father of spirits! And whereas he was of a middle nature, partaking somewhat of the angelical, somewhat of the animal life, how is he swallowed up of the latter, and become like the beasts that perish! as the horse and mule without understanding, as the dog and swine, both for fierceness and impurity; as the

one is both apt to bite and devour, and return to his own vomit, and the other both to rend such as stand in his way, and wallow in the mire. We might add the sundry other Scripture resemblances of wolves, bears, lions, serpents, adders, vipers, &c., whereby many brutes seem to meet in one man; and to have made a collection, and contributed their worst qualities, and all the venom of their natures, to the making up of one mischievous composition in him. So that instead of a temple, he is a cage of every unclean and hurtful thing: he is, in short, of a reprobate mind, full of all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, &c. How repugnant, in all respects, to the holy, pure, benign, merciful nature of God! How remote from the imitation of his Maker, wherein he hath offered himself as his most imitable pattern! And wherein he is not imitable, but requires a proportionable and correspondent deportment or conformity; as, by trust to his all-sufficiency, by subjection to his sovereign power and government. How dismal is the case, and how horrid the effects of the apostacy in these regards! How preposterous and perverse are his dispositions and the course he hath run! For wherein it was permitted to him to imitate and affect likeness to a Deity; where he was put under no restraints, and his highest aspirings had been not only innocent, but most worthy of praise, (as to imitate God in wisdom, righteousness, sincerity, goodness, purity, &c.,) here nothing would please but utmost dissimilitude, and to be as unlike God as he could devise. But in those things that were within the

enclosure, and appropriate most peculiarly to the Godhead; to be the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega; the only one on whom all must depend, and to whom all must be subject and obey; these sacred regalia, the highest rights and flowers of the eternal crown, these are thought fine things, and beheld with a libidinous devouring eye, caught at by a profane sacrilegious hand. Nothing would satisfy but to be godlike in this most disallowed and impossible sense. Man, when he hath reduced himself to the lowest pitch of vileness, misery, and penury, now will be self-sufficient; and when he is become the most abject slave to ignominious lusts and passions, now he will be supreme: that is, having made himself viler than the meanest creature, and worse than nothing, he will be a god, even his own, a god to himself. Having severed and cut himself off from God, he will supply the room, and live only within himself; be to himself what God was, and should ever be. He now moves wholly in his own sphere, disjoined from that of the whole world, and is his own centre. All he does is from himself, and for himself. Thus is the true image of God torn down from his own temple, and that alienated, and become the temple of a false god, dedicate to that abominable idol, self.

(2.) Whence it comes to pass, that man is most disaffected to God, and full of enmity. So Scripture testifies concerning the carnal mind, Rom. viii, 8. And what it had before represented, (chap. ii,) full of all malignity, it afterwards speaks of as directing it (most horrid to think!) against this blessed object: "Haters of God, spiteful," &c. Nor is any thing more natural; for, in part, the contrariety of their



nature to his more immediately begets this enmity, which always rises out of dissimilitude; and, partly, it is fomented and increased to a great degree, by a secret consciousness of that dissimilitude, and the misgivings of their own guilty fears thereupon; which must tell them, whenever they have so much communication with themselves, that they are unlike, and cannot be but displeasing to him: and this infers some kind of dread; whence the passage is short and easy unto hatred. And though the more positive workings of this enmity do not so ordinarily discover themselves; and they do not see or suspect that they hate him, while they are not urged to self-reflection; and when they are, hardly admit a conviction that they do: yet the matter carries its own evidence with it, and would soon be put beyond a question, if men were willing to understand the truth of their own case. For whence else do they so slowly entertain the knowledge of God, when the whole earth is full of his glory? When so manifest prints and footsteps of his wisdom, power, and goodness, do offer themselves to view in every creature, whence can it be, but that they like not to retain him in their knowledge; and that their very hearts say to him, ‘Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways?’ Why is so bright a light not observed, but that it shines amidst a malignant darkness, that, resisting, comprehends it not? Why are the thoughts of God so unpleasant to men and unfrequent, that when one would suppose no thoughts should be so obvious, none so welcome, yet it is become the character of an unrenowned man to forget God, or not to have him in all his thoughts? Why

do men decline his acquaintance, live voluntary strangers to him all their days, and as without him in the world? Why are men so averse to trust him, and turn to him, even upon so mighty assurances? What makes them shy to take his word, but rather count him a liar, though they know it inconsistent with his nature; and can form no notion of God, without including this conception therein, that he cannot lie; when as yet they can ordinarily trust one another, though there be so much colour to say, "All men are liars"? Why do they resist his authority, against which they cannot dispute, and disobey his commands, to which they cannot devise to frame an exception? What but the spirit of enmity can make them regret so easy a yoke, reject so light a burden, shun and fly off from so peaceful and pleasant paths; yea, and take ways that so manifestly take hold of hell, and lead down to the chambers of death, rather choosing to perish than obey? Is not this the very height of enmity? What further proof would we seek of a disaffected and implacable heart? Yet to all this we may cast in that fearful addition, their saying in their heart, 'No God;' as if they should say, 'O that there were none!' This is enmity, not only to the highest pitch of wickedness, (to wish their common Parent extinct, the Author of their being,) but even unto madness itself. For, in the forgetful heat of this transport, it is not thought on that they wish the most absolute impossibility, and that, if it were possible, they wish, with his, the extinction of their own, and of all being; and that the sense of their hearts, put into words, would amount to no less than a direful and most

horrid execration and curse upon God, and the whole creation of God at once ! as if, by the blasphemy of their poisonous breath, they would wither all nature, blast the whole universe of being, and make it fade, languish, and drop into nothing. This is to set their mouth against heaven and earth, themselves, and all things at once, as if they thought their feeble breath should overpower the omnipotent word, shake and shiver the adamantine pillars of heaven and earth, and the almighty *fiat* be defeated by their *nay*, striking at the root of all ! So fitly is it said, ‘The *fool* hath in his heart muttered thus !’ Nor are there few such fools : but this is plainly given us as the common character of apostate man, the whole revolted race ; of whom it is said, in very general terms, “They all are gone back, there is none that doeth good.” This is their sense, one and all ; that is, comparatively : and the true state of the case being laid before them, it is more their temper and sense to say ‘No God,’ than to repent and turn to him. What mad enmity is this ! Nor can we devise into what else to resolve it.

This enmity, indeed, more plainly shows itself where the Divine glory (especially that of his grace and good-will towards men) more brightly shines : yet there are so manifest appeareances of it every where, and he hath so little left himself “without witness” unto any, that the universal strangeness of men towards him, apparently owes itself more to enmity than ignorance ; and even where there is much darkness there is more ill-will. For their ignorance, by which they are alienated from the life of God, is called blindness of heart ; that is, voluntary, affected



blindness. It can be imputed to nothing else, that they who have God so near to every one of them, who live and move and have their being in him, do not yet seek after him, and labour to feel and find him out; that is, that they can miss God so nigh at hand, when they have even palpable demonstrations of his nearness, and kind propensions towards them. Now this being the case, whatever this degenerate vile creature might serve for else, he was plainly most unfit for the use of a temple, or to be the dwelling-place of God.

2. Nor can it now be a wonder that the Divine presence should be hereupon withdrawn; that the blessed God absents himself, and is become a stranger to this his once beloved mansion. We shall here take notice how apparent it is—That he hath done so, and—That he was most highly justifiable herein.

(1.) That God hath withdrawn himself, and left this his temple desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye, that bear in their front (yet extant) this doleful inscription—“*Here God once dwelt.*” Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to show the Divine presence did some time reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity, to proclaim he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct, the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished, which did the one shine with so heavenly brightness, the other burn with so pious fervour; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown away as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the prince of darkness; the

sacred incense, which sent rolling up in clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous, hellish vapour, and here is, "instead of a sweet savour, a stench." The comely order of this house is turned all into confusion; "the beauties of holiness" into noisome impurities; the "house of prayer into a den of thieves," and that of the worst and most horrid kind; for every lust is a thief, and every theft sacrilege: continual rapine and robbery are committed upon holy things. The noble powers which were designed and dedicated to divine contemplation and delight, are alienated to the service of the most despicable idols, and employed unto vilest intuitions and embraces; to behold and admire lying vanities, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness. What! have not the enemies done wickedly in the sanctuary? How have they broken down the carved work thereof, and that too with axes and hammers, the noise whereof was not to be heard in building, much less in the demolishing this sacred frame! Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that great King; the relics of common notions; the lively prints of some undefaced truth; the fair ideas of things; the yet legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold! with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraved by the finger of God, and how they now lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in heaps of dirt and rubbish! There is not now a system, an entire table of coherent truths to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered parcels. And if any, with great toil and labour, apply themselves to draw

out here one piece, and there another, and set them together, they serve rather to show how exquisite the divine workmanship was in the original composition, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was first designed. Some pieces agree, and own one another; but how soon are our inquiries and endeavours nonplussed and superseded! How many attempts have been made, since that fearful fall and ruin of this fabric, to compose again the truths of so many several kinds into their distinct orders, and make up frames of science, or useful knowledge; and after so many ages, nothing is finished in any one kind! Sometimes truths are misplaced, and what belongs to one kind is transferred to another, where it will not fitly match: sometimes falsehood inserted, which shatters or disturbs the whole frame. And what is with much fruitless pains done by one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of greater use, though not most out of sight, are least regarded: their tendency and design are overlooked; or they are so loosened and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the soul, but hover as faint ineffectual notions that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one another confounded and broken: so that what is judged considerable is not considered, what is recommended as eligible and lovely is not loved and chosen. Yea, the truth which is after godliness is not so much disbelieved, as hated, held in unrighteousness; and shines as too



feeble a light in that malignant darkness which comprehends it not. You come, amidst all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some great prince, in which you see here the fragments of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some curious imagery, and all lying neglected and useless among heaps of dirt. He that invites you to take a view of the soul of man, gives you but such another prospect, and both but say to you, "Behold the desolation;" all things rude and waste. So that should there be any pretence to the Divine presence, it might be said, 'If God be here, why is it thus?' The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, the impurity, the decayed state, in all respects, of this temple, too plainly show the great Inhabitant is gone.

(2.) And what was so manifest a sign of God's absence, was also a most righteous cause: for who have committed these great wastes, and made this temple uninhabitable, but men themselves? And what could be more injurious to the holy God, than to invade and profane his temple? Or for what could we suppose him to show more jealousy and concern? Whoever were a God, one would expect he should plead for himself, when men have cast down his altar. No words can express the greatness of the indignity! For do but take the following state of the case, thus:—Man was his own creature, raised out of nothing by his mighty and most arbitrary hand; it was in his power and choice, whether ever he should have being or none, another or this, of so noble an order and kind. The designation was most apt, of so excellent a creature to this office and use, to be immediately sacred to himself, and

his own converse; his temple and habitation, the mansion and residence of his presence and indwelling glory! There was nothing to which he was herein designed, whereof his nature was not capable. His soul was after the required manner, receptive of a Deity; its powers were competent to their appointed work and employment; it could entertain God by knowledge and contemplation of his glorious excellencies, by reverence and love, by adoration and praise. This was the highest kind of dignity to which created nature could be raised, the most honourable state. How high and quick an advance! This moment nothing, the next a being capable and full of God!

It was a most delectable and pleasant state, to be separated to the entertainment of the Divine presence; that as soon as man could first open his eyes, and behold the light and glory of this new-made world, the great Lord and Author of it should present himself, and say, 'Thou shalt be mine.' How grateful a welcome into being! 'Thou, above all my works which thou beholdest, I choose out for myself. Thine employment shall be no laborious, painful drudgery; unless it can be painful to receive the large communications of immense goodness, light, life, and love, that shall, of their own accord, be perpetually flowing in upon thee! Whatsoever thou espiest besides, that is even most excellent and pleasant to thy sense, is yet inferior to thee, and insufficient for thy satisfaction and highest delight, and but the faint shadow of that substantial fullness which I myself will be unto thee.'

There was, in all this, the freest and most con-

descending vouchsafement; no necessity could urge the self-sufficient Good to affect union and familiarity with its own creature. Man's alienation of himself from God was as entirely voluntary, nothing could force him to it; he could have no inducement which it was not easy to resist; heaven and earth could not afford the matter of a regardable temptation, to withdraw him from what did so infinitely excel. But how mean things have become the tempting and prevailing objects! the momentary relishes of a merely sensual delight, that might have been had innocent and pure, without breaking the enclosure. Ravenous appetite, lust after forbidden pleasure, is impatient of restraint: reason, that should have restrained it, resigns its office, falls into a treacherous combination with usurping sense, chooses rather to obey than rule, to rebel than obey; for not to rule, being thereto enjoined by the supreme Ruler, was to rebel. The empire of rebellious appetite was reckoned more tolerable than God's: thus are his authority affronted and his goodness despised, both at once. He is rejected both as Ruler and Benefactor, with equal disrespect to his majesty and grace, to his governing and his heart-delighting presence. And how ignominious, hereupon, is the rejection, when so vile things are chosen and preferred! The tyranny of lust, before his holy, reasonable, orderly government; the pleasures of sin, rather than those of the Divine presence; this being the practical, decisive judgment given in the case, that these are better. It is better to be the meanest drudge and slave than his servant, and to feed upon husks or ashes than his pure and most satisfying communications. And



what he chose to be, he is; that is, with the indignity done to God, he hath joined the vilest debasement of himself. For hence also, how loathsome a creature is he now become! How perverted in all his powers! How full of darkness, confusion, impurity, malignity, and venom! How universally and horridly deformed! And hereof an estimate may be made, from his unaptness to self-reflection; which how notorious is it! What doth he not rather chose to do with his thoughts than turn them inward! And how unfit is he for Divine converse, that cannot endure his own; or to associate with God, that is become too foul a creature to have any satisfying converse with himself! Now what could be expected to ensue upon all this, but that he should be forsaken of God; that the blessed presence be withdrawn, that had been so despitefully slighted, to return no more? No more, untill at least a recompense should be made him for the wrong done, and a capacity be recovered for his future converse: namely, untill both his honour should be repaired, and his temple; untill he might again honourably return, and be fitly received. But who could have thought in what way these things should ever be brought to pass; that is, neither could his departure but be expected, nor his return but be above all expectation? To depart was what became him; a thing, as the case was, most godlike, or worthy of God, and what he owed to himself. It was meet so great a Majesty, having been so condescendingly gracious, should not be also cheap, or appear unapprehensive of being neglected and set at nought. It became him, as the self-sufficient Being, to let it

be seen he designed not man his temple for want of a house ; that having of old inhabited his own eternity, and having now the heavens for his throne, the earth his footstool, he could dwell alone, or where he pleased else, in all his great creation ; and did not need, where he was not desired. That of the Cynic was thought a brave saying, when his malcontented servant turned fugitive, and left him :—  
 “ It were an unworthy thing Manes should think he can live without Diogenes, and that Diogenes cannot without Manes.” How much better would it suit with the real self-fullness of a Deity, where nothing of this kind can look like an empty, hollow boast ! It was becoming of his pure and glorious holiness not to dwell amidst impurities, or let it be thought he was a God that took pleasure in wickedness ; and most suitable to his equal justice to let them, who said to him, “ Depart from us,” feel they spake that word against their own life and soul ; and that what was their rash and wilful choice, is their heaviest doom and punishment. It was only strange, that when he left his temple he did not consume it ; and that, not leaving it without being basely expelled, he hath thought of returning without being invited back again. Yea, and that whatsoever was necessary thereto is designed by his own so strange contrivance, and done at his own so dear expense : his only-begotten Son most freely consenting with him, and in sundry capacities sustaining the weight and burden of this great undertaking. This leads us to the third thing proposed, which will be considered in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

*The restitution of this Temple undertaken by the Emmanuel. The blessed God hath laid the platform and foundations of his present Temple in Emmanuel.*

I. AND indeed, what was to be designed and done, did every way call for so great an undertaker. The indignity offered to the majesty of the most high God, in his so ignominious expulsion from his own temple, was to be recompensed; and the ruin must be repaired which had befallen the temple itself. In reference to both these performances, it was determined that Emmanuel, that is, his own Son, his substantial image, the brightness of his glory, the eternal Word, should become incarnate; and, being so, should undertake several parts, and in distinct capacities, and be at once a single temple himself, and that this temple should be also a sacrifice, and thereby give rise to a manifold temple conformed to that original one, of each whereof, in the virtue of that sacrifice he was himself to be that glorious pattern, the firm foundation, the magnificent founder, and the most curious architect and former, by his own various and most peculiar influence.

This hath been the result of the Divine counsel, and the Lord's own doing, most justly marvelous in our eyes.

II. This leads us to the last thing proposed in the method in the preceding chapter; and to consider,



*Thirdly,* That the blessed God hath laid the platform and the foundation of his temple, as it was to be restored and set up again among men, in and by that great Emmanuel, his own Son, made flesh. It is to be considered, that the world had a long time lain deluged with wickedness, sunk in sensuality and a deep oblivion of God; his memorial was even lost among men, and nothing less thought of than a temple in the true design and meaning of it; the notices of God, and any inclination to religion, that remained, were yet so faint and weak, carnal and terrene propensions so strong, that the vital religion, which was the proper business of a living temple, could have no place. It was not so only in the Pagan world, from which God had further withdrawn himself, but even with that select people to whom he vouchsafed more peculiar manifestations and symbols of his mind and presence.

They had a *figurative temple* by his own appointment, erected in much glory among them, that might have instructed them, and by degrees the rest of the world, if they would have understood its true meaning and signification, that God was yet willing to dwell with men on earth, and that it should be a "house of prayer for all nations," who ought, upon those glorious appearances of God among that people, to have gradually proselyted themselves unto them. It prefigured what he intended, namely, in his appointed season, by his own Son, to descend and inhabit, make and constitute him a much more glorious temple than could be built of wood or stone, or by the hands of men: that, in after time, "Shiloh should come, unto whom the gathering of the people

should be," and by whom he would reconcile and recollect the apostate world back again to himself. But all this was an unintelligible mystery on all hands; entered not into the minds of men of either sort, but much less into their hearts; and the Jews did much more affect to Paganize, and go farther off from God, than the Pagans to Judaize, and draw nearer to him. The natural sentiments of religion, which were common to all men, did run out only into mere external observances and empty formalities, that might well enough agree with a sensual life, transacted in habitual estrangement from God, and as without him in the world; so as not only to answer the true intent and use of a temple, but to frustrate and elude it.

When this was the state of things with this world, and the fullness of time was now come, wherein God intended, with more vigour and efficacy, to renew and reinforce his mighty and merciful work of setting up his temple, and to make it rise in splendour and glory in the world, he at length sends down his Son:—he puts on man; becomes Emmanuel; an incarnate God among men; and a Man inhabited by all the fullness of God. This man was, therefore, a most perfect Temple; the *original one*: that is, not only a single one himself, but an exemplary Temple, to which all other were to be conformed; the advantage whereof, to the forming of more, we shall see hereafter: whereby he was also a *virtual one*, from which life and influence were to be transfused to raise and form all others. But, in order to its being so, this very temple must become a sacrifice; and by dying, multiply: a seminal temple, as we shall

hereafter show, and as he himself represents the matter, John, xii, 24. And which is in the full sense of it said, 1 Peter, ii, where, when we were first told, (verses 4, 5,) we must come to him as unto a living stone, and as lively stones be built up a spiritual house; we are further told, (verse 24,) that he himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. For now, a temple being, in its proper use and design, intended for divine honour, could not have its foundation in the ruin thereof, or be built upon his unremedied dishonour: the Son of God, by tendering himself for a valuable recompense, must be the corner-stone of this new building. The wrong that man had done to the Divine majesty should be expiated by none but man, and could be by none but God. Behold, then, the wonderful conjunction of both in the one Emmanuel! who was by his very constitution, an *actual Temple*—"God with us:" the habitation of the Deity returned, and resettling itself with men; and fitted to be a most acceptable sacrifice. For here were met together man that could die, and God that could overcome death; man that might suffer, and God that could give sufficient value to those sufferings; sufficient to atone the offended Majesty, and procure that life might be diffused, and spread itself to all that should unite with him; whereby they might become living stones, joined to that living corner-stone; a spiritual temple, again capable of that Divine presence which they had forfeited, and whereof they were forsaken.

III. That all this may be the better understood, we shall endeavour to show, more distinctly, the



*sufficiency* and aptness of the constitution and appointment of Emmanuel, (considering what he was, and what was undertaken to be suffered and performed by him,) as the most proper and adequate means for the restoring of God's temple with men; and the *necessity* of this course for this end.

*First*: And for the aptness and *sufficiency* of this course, or what the setting up of Emmanuel might do for this purpose, may be seen in the suitableness hereof to the foregoing state of the case, and by comparing therewith what he is, and hath done and suffered in order hereto. We have seen that the former desolate state of this temple was occasioned and inferred by man's apostacy, and God's departure thereupon. There was therefore the concurrence of somewhat on man's part, and somewhat on God's, unto this desolation: on man's, what was unjust, leading, and causing; on God's, what was most just, consequent, and caused thereby: man's unrighteous and ill-deserving aversion from God, and God's most righteous and deserved aversion hereupon from him: the one caused by the other, but both causing, in different kinds, the vacancy and deserted state of this temple which ensued; the former as a sinning, the latter as a punishing cause. Now what we have considerable in Emmanuel towards the restoration of this temple, and that it might become again habitable and replenished by the Divine presence as before, is answerable to this state of the case; and directly tending to compose things between the distanced parties, both on the one part and the other. And because God was to have the first and leading part in reconciliations, as man hath in disagreements, we have

enough in him, whereupon God might express himself willing to rebuild and return to his former dwelling, and man be willing to render it back to him, and admit the operation of the fashioning hand whereby it is to be prepared and refitted for its proper use.

1. That God might rebuild and return to his former temple. This is effected; and a foundation is laid for the effecting of the other too, in his becoming *a sacrifice* to justice: a sacrifice so rich and fragrant, so full of value and grateful savour, as that abundant recompense is made by it for the wrong man had done to the Majesty of heaven, by profaning and polluting this temple, and expelling so contumeliously its great inhabitant:—an injury to which the creation, consuming in a universal flame, had been an unproportionable sacrifice; but the sacrifice of himself, the Emmanuel, God-Man, could be defective in nothing—was both suitable and equal to the exigency of the case. For the sacrifice of him who was man, was suitable to the offence of man; and of him who was God, was equal to the wrong done to God. Long before this sacrifice was offered, the expectation, and since, the remembrance of it, have been precious. It was of sufficient virtue to work and diffuse its influence at the greatest distance—and not of time only, but of place too; to perfume the world, and scatter blessings through all the parts and nations of it, as well as through all the ages. When no other sacrifice or offerings could avail any thing, lo! He comes into a body prepared on purpose: which, though it was not formed and assumed untill the fullness of time, was yet reckoned as slain from the beginning of it. This was the seed in

which, though it sprung up only in Judea, yet all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. Long was this body in preparing, and the seed transmitted through many generations, whence it was at length to arise; into which, as its last preparation, the Deity descended, and, that it might be a sufficiently costly sacrifice, filled it with the Divine fullness; for “in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.” When we read Abel’s sacrifice to have been more excellent than Cain’s, the Greek word is, it was *fuller*. How full a one was this! That was filled by faith with a derivative fullness; this, immediately by God himself, with his own self-fullness, which filleth all in all, and whence all must receive.

Being so filled, it was a temple, and must now further be a sacrifice. Both are signified in that one short passage which himself let fall, “Destroy this temple:” that is, that he was a temple, and was to be destroyed; which is carried in the notion of a sacrifice. This he said of his body. Strange mystery! The very temple itself a consuming oblation, self-devoted even to destruction, and out of that again self-raised! The Divine justice could not hereby but be well satisfied, and say, ‘It was enough,’ when the whole temple became all propitiatory, and the profanation of the former temple was expiated by the immolation of the new: so that, in point of honour and justice, no exception could now lie against the return of the Divine presence to its wasted and forsaken temple. Only his return could not, as yet, be presently to dwell there, (for it was most unfit,) but to refit and prepare it for his future dwelling. It had been long desolate, and hereby was become



decayed and ruinous, full of noisome impurities; yea, the habitation of dragons and devils of Ziim, and Jiim, and Ochim. Many an abominable idol was set up here, that filled up the room of the one God that had forsaken and left it. It was wholly in the possession of false gods, for whose use it was the more fit, by how much it was the less fit for his; for amidst darkness, confusion, and filthiness, was the chosen seat of the principalities and powers that now did dwell and rule here. Here was the throne of the prince of darkness, the resort of his associates, the altars of as many lusts as the heart of man, now wholly given up to all manner of wickedness, could multiply unto itself; by whose consent and choice this horrid alienation had been made and continued. Upon such terms, the “strong man armed kept the house.”

The blessed God would now return, but he must build before he dwell, and conquer before he build. He might return, but not upon other terms than the expiatory value, and actual or ascertained oblation of that above-mentioned sacrifice; for when he forsook this his temple, he left it with just resentment, and his most righteous curse upon it—a curse that was of this import, ‘Never any thing holy or pure, any more come here, or any thing good and pleasant. The light of the sun never shine any more at all on thee: the voice of joy and gladness never be heard any more at all in thee.’ The powerful horror of this curse held it doomed to all the desolation and misery that were upon it; confirmed it in the power of him that ruled here at his will. Hence had the magic and charms of the evil one their permitted,

unresisted efficacy, rendered it an enchanted place; related and adjoined to it the nether world, the infernal region; made it the next neighbourhood, even of the very suburbs of hell; and barred out all divine light and grace, all heavenly beams and influences from it. So that, had it not been for this Sacrifice, this temple had been and remained, even in the same kind, an accursed place, as hell itself: the Spirit of God should have had no more to do here than there; for so the sentence and curse of his violated law had determined; "Thou shalt die the death," did say no less.

But now, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal. iii. He was made a curse for us: not the same in kind which we had incurred, (which it were horrid to think,) but such as his state could admit, and ours could require. For that a person so immutably pure and holy should become an impure thing, was what his state could not admit; and that one of so high dignity should willingly suffer to that degree which he did for us, was a thing of so great merit and value, as to answer the uttermost of our ill-deservings, than which the exigency of our case could not, in that respect, call for more. And the end or design of his becoming to that degree a curse for us, being expressly said to be this, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit, (or the promised Spirit,) implies, that the curse upon us had intercepted and cut off from us all

influences of that holy blessed Spirit; for the fresh emission whereof, in God's own stated method, he had now again opened the way. That this blessing is hereby said to become the portion of the Gentiles was enough to the apostle's present purpose, writing to the Galatians; the Jews having, upon the same terms, had the same privilege formerly from age to age. "Thou gavest thy good Spirit to instruct them,"—which also is implied in their being charged with vexing and rejecting this blessed Spirit, one generation after another. And they had now the same Gospel, and are here also included, in that it is said to be the blessing of Abraham, into the communion whereof the Gentiles are now declared to have been admitted, about which so great doubt had been in those days. That therefore the Spirit might be given for the mentioned purpose, on the account of the Son of God's oblation of himself, is out of question. The necessity that he should be only given on these terms will be seen hereafter in its proper place.

But whereas it hath been designed, in all this discourse, to represent the constitution of Emmanuel, (being first made a personal temple, then a sacrifice,) as an apt and fit mean to multiply this one temple into many, and bring it about, that, upon just and honourable terms, God might again return to inhabit the souls of men: it may, perhaps, be alleged by some, that it seems an unrighteous thing God should appoint his own innocent Son to be punished for the sins of offending creatures, and let them escape: and then how could an unjust act make for the honour of his justice, or that which was in itself unfit be a fit



mean to any good end? The loud clamours wherewith some later contenders have filled the Christian world upon this subject make it fit to say somewhat of it; and the thing itself needs not that we say much. We do know that the innocent Son of God was crucified; we know it by God's determinate counsel; we know it was for the sins of men; we know many of those sinners do finally escape deserved punishment. The truth of these things, in fact, is disputed on neither side: all these, then, are acknowledged reconcilable and consistent with the justice of God. What then is to be inferred? Not that these things are not so, for that they are is acknowledged on all hands. What then? That God is unjust? Will their zeal for the reputation of God's justice admit of this? No; but it is only unjust to count this suffering of his Son a punishment; that is, it is unjust he should suffer for a valuable and necessary purpose: not that he should suffer needlessly, or for no purpose that might not have been served without it. But why may not the sufferings of Christ be looked on as a punishment? Because they will have it be essential to punishment, that it be inflicted on the person that offended; and then inconsistent with its notion and essence, that it be inflicted on an innocent person. But if so, the pretence for the cry of injustice vanishes, unless they will be so absurd as to say, 'It is very just to afflict an innocent person, but not to punish him, when the punishment hath no more in it of real evil to him that suffers it than the admitted affliction.' And when they say, 'the very notion of punishment carries in it an essential respect to that personal guilt of him that bears it,' it implies

that, in the present case, punishment hath no place, not because it is unjust, but because it is impossible. In the mean time, how vain and ludicrous is that pretence, that all the real evil which God determined should befall his Son, he should let come upon him with acknowledged justice, but that the injustice must lie only in a notion; that is, if he look upon it as a punishment. Yet also the punishing of one for another's offence is forbidden to men, as themselves allege from Deut. xxiv, 16, (as it is not strange God should disallow men that dominion over one another, which he may claim to himself, and which he is in no such possibility to abuse as they,) which therefore shows their notion of punishment is false, by which they would make it impossible for one man to be punished for another's faults, inasmuch as it were absurd to forbid a thing that is impossible. And that God himself doth often punish the sins of some upon others, is evident enough from many places of Holy Scripture, particularly the second commandment: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children," &c.—2 Sam. xxiv, 15, &c.—1 Kings, xiv.—Lam. v, 7. Whereas, therefore, they are wont, on the contrary, to allege that of Ezek. xviii: "Ye shall no more use this proverb, 'The fathers have eaten the sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.'" It is plain, in that it is said, "Ye shall no more," &c., that the blessed God speaks here of what, in merciful indulgence, he for the future would not do, not of what in strict justice he might not; for can it be supposed he owns himself to have dealt unjustly with them before?

It is evidently, therefore, neither impossible nor unjust to punish one for another's offence ; and the matter only seems harsh to such as have misshapen to themselves the notion of punishment, and make it only correspond to the appetite of private revenge ; whereas, it only answers to a just will of vindicating the rights and honour of government, which may most fitly be done upon another than the offender, not at random, or in an undistinguishing promiscuous hurry, but upon two suppositions—First, If there be a near conjunction between the person punished with the person offending. Secondly, If there be a consent and voluntary susception of the former on behalf of the other. And we add, as a third, Especially if there be thereupon a legal substitution, the supreme ruler upon that consent also agreeing, providing, by a special law made in the case, for such transferring of the guilt and punishment. All which have so eminently concurred in the present case, that it can proceed from nothing but a disposition to cavil, further to insist and contend about it. And we know that such translations have, among men, not only been esteemed just, but laudable ; as in the known story of Zaleucus, who, having ordained that adultery among his Locricas should be punished with the loss of both eyes, and his own son afterwards being found guilty of that crime, was content to lose one of his own eyes, that justice might be done to the public constitution, and mercy be shown to his son in saving one of his : and that of the Pythagoreans, Damon and Pythias, the one of whom pawned his own life to the tyrant, to procure time for the other (condemned to die) wherein to settle some affairs abroad before



his death; who returning within the limited time to save his faith and his friend's life, by surrendering his own, so moved the tyrant, that he spared both. The common case of man, forsaken of the Divine presence, and not to be restored without recompense, was the most deplorable and the most important that could be thought. And it may now be compassionately cared for; this having been obtained by this great sacrifice, that the Divine justice is so well satisfied, and his majesty and honour so fully asserted and vindicated, as that he now may, without wrong to himself, (his justice and the dignity of his government not reclaiming against it,) cast a compassionate and favourable eye upon the desolations of his temple; take up kind thoughts towards it; send forth his mightier Spirit to dispossess the "strong man armed," to vanquish the combined enemy-powers, to build and cleanse and beautify the habitation of his holiness, and then inhabit and dwell in it: upon which account it is now called the temple of the Holy Ghost; the Spirit which the Father sends, in the name of the Son, upon this errand—he having obtained that it should be sent. By which Spirit, also, Emmanuel was sufficiently enabled to gain our consent to all this—for his dying on the cross was not that he might have the Spirit in himself, but that he might have the power of communicating it: and so might the foundation be laid for what is to be done on our part, by the offering of this sacrifice; of which we are next further to treat.

2. That which was to be done on our part, in order to the restoring of God's temple in us, was that we be made willing of his return, and that there be wrought

in us whatsoever might tend to make us fitly capable of so great a presence. More needs not to be said to show that we were most unwilling. And that our becoming willing was requisite, is sufficiently evident. For what sort of a temple are we to be? Not of wood and stone; but as our worship must be all reasonable service, of the same constitution must the temple be whence it is to proceed. We are to be temples, by self-dedication, separating ourselves unto that purpose; and are to be the voluntary under-labourers in the work that is to be done for the preparing of this temple for its proper use: and the use which is to be made of it, that there the blessed God and we might amicably and with delight converse together, supposes our continual willingness, which therefore must be once obtained. Now, unto this purpose, also, the constitution of Emmanuel was most suitable; or the setting up of this one eminent temple first, *God in Christ*. This was a leading case, and had a further design: it was never meant that the Divine presence should be confined to that one single Person, or only that God should have a temple on earth as long as the Man Christ should reside there: but he was to be the *primary original temple*; and his being so did contribute to the making us willing to become his temples also.

(1.) As here was the fullness of that Spirit, by whose power and influence that and all the subsequent work was to be wrought in us: which fullness is, by that blessed name EMMANUEL, signified to be in him on purpose to be communicated, or as what must be some way common to God with us. Our aversion was not easily vincible: the people, it was

said, (speaking of the reign of Emmanuel,) should be willing in the day of his power; and, as it follows, in the beauties of holiness. This was a known name of God's temple, (1 Chron. xvi, 29,) for the building whereof David was now preparing, and whereto the passages agree, Psalm xxvii, 4, xcvi, 8, 9. And that spiritual one whereof we speak must be here chiefly meant, whereof the Christian world, in its exterior frame, is but the outer court; or is subordinate to the interior frame, and to the work thereof, but as scaffolds to the building which they enclose. The people shall be *willing*, but not otherwise than being made so by *his power*; and that not always put forth, but in the *day* of his power—on a noted memorable day—a day intended for the demonstration and magnifying of his power; that is, the season when Emmanuel (the Lord, to whom the speech is addressed) would apply and set himself, even with his might, to the great work of restoring and raising up the temple of God: a work not to be done by might and power, (according to the common vulgar notion thereof, by which nothing is reckoned might and power but a visible arm of flesh, hosts and armies, horses and chariots,) but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Then, though the spirits of men swell as mountains, in proud enmity and opposition, those mountains shall appear bubbles: what are they before this great Undertaker? They shall become a plain, when the Head-stone is brought forth with shoutings, unto which the cry shall be, 'Grace, grace.' This is the Stone laid in Zion for a foundation, sure and tried, elect and precious—disallowed by men, but chosen of God—the chief Stone of the



corner—a living, spiritual Stone, from which is a mighty effluence of life and spirit, all to attract and animate other stones, and draw them into union with itself, so as to compact and raise up this admirable fabric—a spiritual house for “spiritual sacrifice, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ:” as a Stone that shall spread life through the whole frame; called therefore a Branch as well as a Stone, whereto is attributed the work and the glory of building God’s temple. “Behold the Man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory,” &c. A plain indication that the prophecies of that book did not ultimately terminate in the restoration of the temple at Jerusalem; but, more mystically, intended the great comprehensive temple of the living God, which the Messiah should extend and diffuse, by a mighty communication of his Spirit, through the world; when “they that are afar off shall come and build in the temple of the Lord:” “and the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, Let us go speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seek the Lord of hosts; I will go also. Many people and strong nations,” &c. Ten men out of all languages to one Jew, that shall say, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. (See Micah, iv, 2.) This, it is said, shall be at Jerusalem, but it must be principally meant of the New Jerusalem, that cometh down from heaven, that is from above, that is free with her children, and is the mother of us all. And how plentiful an effusion of Spirit—how mighty and general an attrac-

tion by it, is signified in all this, by which so deeply-rooted an aversion to God and serious living religion, as is known to be common to men, is overcome, and turned into willingness and inclination towards him ! and whereby that great primary temple, CHRIST replenished with the Divine fullness, multiplies itself into so many, or enlarges itself into that one, his church ; called also his body, (as both his very body and that church are called his temple,) the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. Nor need it scruple us, or give us any trouble, that we find this name of a temple placed upon a good man singly and alone, sometimes upon the whole community of such together. Each one bears a double habitude—direct towards God, by which he is capable of being his private mansion ; collateral towards our fellow-Christians, whereby he is a part of his more enlarged dwelling. Whenever, then, any accession is made to this spiritual temple, begun in Christ himself, it is done by a further diffusion of that Spirit, whereof that *original temple* is the first receptacle.

(2.) But moreover, because it was a *rational subject* that was to be wrought upon, it is also to be expected that the work itself be done in a *rational way*. These that must be made living, and that were before intelligent stones, were not to be hewed, squared, polished, and moved to and fro by a violent hand ; but being to be rendered willing, must be dealt with in a way suitable to the effect to be wrought. They are themselves to come as lively stones to the living Corner Stone, by a vital act of their own will ; which, we know, is not to be moved by force, but rational allurements. Wherefore this being the thing

to be brought about, it is not enough to enquire or understand by what power, but one would also covet to know by what motive or inducement, is this willingness and vital co-operation brought to pass; and we shall find this *original temple*, the Emmanuel, had not only in it a spring of sufficient power, but also,

(3.) In its constitution a great accommodateness thereto; carrying with it enough of argument and rational inducement, whereby to persuade and overcome our wills into a cheerful compliance and consent. And that,

[1.] As it was itself the most significant demonstration of *Divine love*, than which nothing is more apt to move and work upon the spirit of man. The bonds of love are the cords of a man, of an attractive power, most peculiarly suitable to human nature: "we love him, because he first loved us." This is rational magnetism. When, in the whole sphere of beings, we have so numerous instances of things that propagate themselves, and beget their like, can we suppose the Divine love to be only barren and destitute of this power? And we find, among those that are born of God, there is nothing more eminently conspicuous in this production than love. This new creature were otherwise a dead creature. This is its very heart, life, and soul; that which acts and moves it towards God, and is the spring of all holy operations. Since then love is found in it, and is so eminent a part of its composition, what should be the parent of this love but love? Nor is this a blind or unintelligent production, in respect of the manner of it, either on the part of that which begets, or of



that which is begotten: not only he who is propagating his own love designs it, and knows what he is about, but he that is hereby made to love knows whereto he is to be formed, and receives through an enlightened mind the very principle, power, and spirit of love. Is his love the cause of ours; or do we love him because he loved us first? And what sort of cause is it, or how doth it work its effect otherwise than as his love—testifying and expressing itself lets us see how reasonable and congruous it is that we should love back again? As is more than intimated by the same sacred writer, in that epistle: “Hereby perceive we the love of God,” &c. Somewhat or other must first render his love perceivable to us, that thereby we may be induced to love him for his own, and our brother for his sake. And again, “We have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love,” &c. After which it shortly follows, “We love him, because he first loved us; as if he should say, ‘The way of God’s bringing us to that love-union with himself, that we by love dwell in him, and he in us, is by his representing himself a Being of love.’” Untill he beget in us that apprehension of himself, and we be brought to know and believe the love that he hath towards us, this is not done. But where have we that representation of God’s love towards us, save in Emmanuel? This is the sum of the ministry of reconciliation, or, which is all one, of making men love God; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, &c. This was the very make and frame, the *constitution* and *design* of the *original temple*, to be the “Tabernacle of witness;” a visible

testimony of the love of God, and of his kind and gracious propensions towards the race of men, however they were become an apostate and degenerate race ; to let them see how inclined and willing he was to become acquainted again with them, and that the old intimacy and friendship, long since out-worn, might be renewed. And this gracious inclination was testified partly by Christ's taking up his abode on earth, or by the erecting of this *original temple*, by the Word's being made flesh, wherein he did *tabernacle* among us. That whereas we did dwell here in earthly tabernacles, (only now destitute and devoid of the Divine presence,) he most kindly comes and pitches his tent amongst our tents ; sets up his tabernacle by ours, replenished and full of God : so that here the Divine glory was familiarly visible, the glory of the only-begotten Son of the Father, shining with mild and gentle rays, such as should allure, not affright us, nor their terror make us afraid. A veil is most condescendingly put on, lest majesty should too potently strike unaccustomed and misgiving minds ; and what is more terrible of this glory is allayed by being interwoven with "grace and truth." Upon this account might it now truly be proclaimed, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men!" That is performed which once seemed hardly credible, and (when that temple was raised that was intended but for a type and shadow of this) was spoken of with wondering expostulation : "In very deed will God dwell with men on earth!" Whereas it might have been reasonably thought this world should have been for ever forsaken of God, and no appearance of him ever have been seen here, unless with a design of

taking vengeance ; how unexpected and surprising a thing was this, that in a state of so comfortless darkness and desolation, the “day-spring from on high should visit it,” and that God should come down and settle him in so mean a dwelling on purpose to seek the acquaintance of his offending disaffected creatures ! But chiefly and more eminently this his gracious inclination was testified,—

By the manner and design of his leaving this his earthly abode, and yielding that his temple to destruction : “ Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up.” This, being an animated living temple, could not be destroyed without sense of pain, unto which it could not willingly become subject but upon design ; and that could be no other than a design of love. When he could have commanded twelve legions of angels to have been the guardians of this temple, to expose it to the violence of profane and barbarous hands ! this could proceed from nothing but love ; and greater love could none show, especially if we consider what was the designed event. This temple was to fall but single, that it might be raised manifold : it was intended to be multiplied by being destroyed—as himself elegantly illustrates the matter : “ Verily, verily I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit ;” which he afterwards expresses without a metaphor,—“ And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,” signifying, as it follows, the death he should die, “ will draw all men unto me.”

We will not here insist on what was said before, that hereby the way was opened for the emission of the Spirit, which, when it came forth, performed such



wonders in this kind, creating and forming into temples many a disaffected unwilling heart. Whence it may be seen, that he forsook that his present dwelling; not that he might dwell here no longer, but only to change the manner of his dwelling, and that he might dwell here more to common advantage; the thing he intended when he came down. He came down that, by dying and descending low into the lower parts of the earth, he might make way for a glorious ascent; and ascended, that he might fill all things; that he might give gifts to men, even the rebellious also, that he might dwell among them. Not, I say, to insist on this, which shows the power by which those great effects were wrought, we may also here consider the way wherein they were wrought; that is, by way of representation and demonstration of the Divine love to men. How brightly did this shine in the glorious ruin and fall of this temple! Herein, how did redeeming love triumph! how mightily did it conquer and slay the enmity that wrought in the minds of men before! Here he overcame by dying, and slew by being slain. Now were his arrows sharp in the hearts of enemies, by which they became subject. What wounded him did, by a strong reverberation, wound them back again. How inwardly were thousands of them pierced by the sight of him whom they had pierced! How sharp a sting was in those words, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ!" for it immediately follows, "When they heard this, they were pricked to the heart." They that crucified him are crucified with him, are now in agonies,

and willing to yield to any thing they are required —“Men and brethren, what shall we do?” He may have temples now for taking them; the most obdurate hearts are overcome; and what could be so potent an argument? what so accommodate to the nature of man—so irresistible by it? To behold this live-temple of the living God, the sacred habitation of a Deity, full of pure and holy life and vigour, by vital union with the eternal Godhead, voluntarily devoted and made subject to the most painful and ignominious suffering, purposely to make atonement for the offence done by revolted creatures against their rightful Lord! What rocks would not rend at this spectacle; enough to put the creation (as it did) into a paroxysm, and bring upon it travailing pangs! And how strange if the hearts of men, only next and most closely concerned, should alone be unmoved, and without the sense of such pangs! Well might it be said, “I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men,” without any such diminishing sense as to mean by that *all* a very few only; not intending so much by it the effect wrought, as the power or natural aptitude of the cause. As if he should say, ‘This were enough to vanquish and subdue the world, to mollify every heart of man; and to leave the character upon them of most inhuman creatures, and unworthy to be called men, that shall not be drawn.’ It might be expected that every one that hath not abandoned humanity, or hath the spirit of a man in him, should be wrought upon by this mean: and they cannot but incur most fearful guilt, even all men, who, once having notice of this matter, are not effectually wrought upon by it.

Upon which account the apostle asks the Galatians, (who had not otherwise seen this sight than as the Gospel narrative had represented it to them,) who had bewitched them that they should not obey, before whose eyes Christ had been set forth crucified among them? intimating, that he could not account them less than bewitched whom the representation of Christ crucified did not captivate into his obedience. And since, in his crucifixion, he was a sacrifice, that is, placatory and reconciling, and that reconciliations are always mutual, of both the contending parties to one another; it must have the proper influence of a sacrifice immediately upon both, and as well mollify men's hearts towards God, as procure that he should express favourable inclinations towards them. That is, that all enmity should cease and be abolished for ever; that wrongs be forgotten, rights restored, and entire friendship, amity, and free converse, be renewed, and be made perpetual. All which signifies, that by this mean the spirits of men be so wrought upon that they render back to God his own temple, most willingly, not merely from an apprehension of his right, but as overcome by his love; and valuing his presence more than their own life. Guilt is very apt to be always jealous. No wonder if the spirits of men, conscious of so great wrong done to God, (and a secret consciousness there may be even where there are not very distinct and explicit reflections upon the case,) be not very easily induced to think God reconcilable. And while he is not thought so, what can be expected but obstinate aversion on their part? For what so hardens as despair? Much indeed might be collected, by deeply-considering minds, of



a propension, on God's part, to peace and friendship, from the course of his providence, and present dispensation towards the world; his clemency, long-suffering, and, most of all, his bounty towards them. These lead to repentance in their own natural tendency: yet are they but dull insipid gospel in themselves to men drowned in sensuality, buried in earthliness, in whom the divine Spirit breathes not, and who have provoked the blessed Spirit to keep at a distance, by having stupified and laid asleep the considering power of their own spirit. Nor are these the usual means, apart and by themselves, which the Spirit of God is wont to work by upon the hearts of men, as experience and observation of the common state of the Pagan world doth sadly testify; and without the concurrence of that blessed Spirit, even the most apt and suitable means avail nothing.

But now where there is so express a testification, as we find in the Gospel of Christ, of God's willingness to be reconciled; a proclamation distinctly made, that imports no other thing but glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards men; (for confirmation whereof, the Son of God incarnate is represented slain, and offered up a bloody sacrifice; and that we might see at once both that God is reconcilable, by the highest demonstration imaginable, and how or upon what terms he comes to be so;) no place for reasonable doubt any longer remains. We have before our eyes, what, by the wonderful strangeness of it, should engage the most stupid minds to consider the matter; what ought to assure the most misgiving, doubtful mind, that God is in good earnest, and intends no mockery or deceit

in his offer of peace ; and what ought to melt, mollify, and overcome the most obdurate heart. Yea, not only what is in its own nature most apt to work towards the producing these happy effects is here to be found, but wherewith also the Spirit of grace is ready to concur and work ; it being his pleasure, and most fit and comely in itself, that he should choose to unite and fall in with the aptest means, and apply himself to the spirits of men in a way most suitable to their own natures, and most likely to take and prevail with them : whereupon the Gospel is called the “ministration of spirit and life, and the power of God to salvation.” But that this gospel, animated by that mighty and good Spirit, hath not universally spread itself over all the world, only its own resolved and resisting wickedness is the faulty cause ; otherwise there had been gospel, and temples raised by it, every where.

[2.] This *original primary temple* hath matter of rational inducement in it ; as it gives us a plain representation of *Divine holiness* brightly shining in human nature. For here was to be seen a most pure, serene, dispassionate mind, unpolluted by any earthly tincture, inhabiting an earthly tabernacle like our own. A mind adorned with the most amiable, lovely virtues, faith, patience, temperance, godliness ; full of all righteousness, goodness, meekness, mercifulness, sincerity, humility ; most abstracted from this world, immoveably intent upon what had reference to a future state of things, and the affairs of another country ; inflexible by the blandishments of sense ; not apt to judge by the sight of the eye, or be charmed by what were most

grateful to a voluptuous ear; full of pity towards a wretched, sinful world, compassionate to its calamities, unprovoked by its sharpest injuries; bent upon doing the greatest good, and prepared to the suffering of whatever evil. Here was presented to common view, a life transacted agreeably to such a temper of mind; of one invariable tenor; equal, uniform, never unlike itself, or disagreeing with the exactest or most strict rules. Men might see a god was come down to dwell among them; “the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person:” a deity inhabiting human flesh; for such purposes as he came for, could not be supposed to carry any more becoming appearance than he did. Here was, therefore, an *exemplary temple*; the fair and lovely pattern of what we were each of us to be composed and formed to: imitating us (for sweeter insinuation and allurements) in what was merely natural, and inviting us to imitate him in what was (in a communicable sort) supernatural and divine. Every one knows how great is the power of example, and may collect how apt a method this was to move and draw the spirits of men. Had only precepts and instructions been given men, how they were to prepare and adorn in themselves a temple for the living God, it had, indeed, been a great vouchsafement; but how much had it fallen short of what the present state of man did, in point of means, need, and call for! How great a defalcation were it from the Gospel, if we did want the history of the life of Christ! But not only to have been told of what materials the temple of God must consist, but to have seen them composed and put together; to have opportunity of



viewing the beautiful frame in every part, and of beholding the lovely, imitable glory of the whole, and which we are to follow, though we cannot with equal steps: how merciful condescension, and how great an advantage is this unto us! We have here a state of entire devotedness to God, (the principal thing in the constitution of his temple,) exemplified before our eyes, together with what was most suitable besides to such a state. Do we not see how, in a body of flesh, one may be subject to the will of God; to count the doing of it our meat and drink—when it imposes any thing grievous to be suffered, to say, “Not my will, but thine be done”—how, in all things, to seek not our own glory, but his, and not to please ourselves, but him—how hereby to keep his blessed presence with us, and live in his constant converse and fellowship, never to be left alone; but to have him ever with us, as always aiming to do the things that please him? Do we not know how to be tempted, and abstain; injured, and forgive; disobliged, and do good; to live in a tumultuous, world, and be at peace within; to dwell on earth, and have our conversation in heaven? We see all this hath been done, and much more than we can here mention: and, by so lively a representation of the brightest divine excellencies, beautifying this *original exemplary temple*, we have a two-fold most considerable advantage towards our becoming such; namely, that hereby both the *possibility* and the *loveliness* of a temple are here represented to our view: by the former whereof we might be encouraged, by the latter allured, unto imitation; *that* working upon our hope, *this* upon our desire, and love in order hereto.

First, The *possibility*. \* I mean it not in the strict sense only, as signifying no more than that the thing, simply considered, implies no repugnance in itself, nor is without the reach of absolute omnipotence; for as no one needs to be told that such a thing is, in this sense, possible, so to be told it, would signify little to his encouragement. There are many things in this sense not impossible, whereof no man can, however, have the least rational hope: as, that another world may shortly be made; that he may be a prince or a great man therein; with a thousand the like. But I mean it of what is possible to Divine power, that is, to the grace and Spirit of God, now ready to go forth in a way and method of operation already stated and pitched upon for such purposes. For having the representation before our eyes of this *original temple*, that is, God inhabiting human flesh on earth, we are not merely to consider it as it is in itself, and to look upon it as a strange thing, or as a glorious spectacle, wherein we are no further concerned than only to look upon it, and take notice that there is or hath been such a thing; but we are to consider how it came to pass, and with what design it was that such a thing should be, and become obvious to our view. Why have we such a sight offered us; or what imports it to us? And when we have informed ourselves, by taking the account the Gospel gives us of this matter, and viewed the inscription of that great name *Emmanuel*, by wonderful contrivance, inwrought into the very constitution of this temple, we shall then find this to be intended for a leading case; and that this temple was meant for a model and platform of that which

we ourselves are to become; or after which the temple of God in us must be composed and formed: and so, that this matter is possible to an ordinate, divine power, even to that mighty Spirit that resides eminently in this temple, on purpose to be transmitted thence to us, for the framing of us to the likeness of it; and so that the thing is not merely possible, but designed also, namely, that as he was, so we might be in this world: to which is necessary our believing intuition towards him, or a fiducial acknowledgment that this Jesus is the Son of God, come down on purpose into human flesh, to bring about a union between God and us: whereupon that union itself ensues: the matter is brought about, we come to dwell in God, and he in us. And this we collect and conclude from hence, that we find the same Spirit working and breathing in us which did in him: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." And though it was an unmeasured fullness of this Spirit which dwelt in this *primary temple*, yet we are taught and encouraged hence to expect, that a sufficient and proportionable measure be imparted to us, that we may appear not altogether unlike or unworthy of him; that this temple and ours are of the same make, and "both he that sanctifieth, and they that are sanctified, are all of one;" that we so far agree with our original, that he may not be ashamed to call us brethren. And how aptly doth this tend to excite and raise our hope of some great thing to be effected in this kind in us, when we have the matter thus exemplified already before our eyes, and do behold the exact and perfect model, according



whereto we ourselves are to be framed. Nor doth that signify a little to the drawing of our wills, or the engaging us to a consent and co-operation, as the under-builders in the work of this temple. A design that in itself appears advantageous, needs no more to set it on foot, than that it be represented hopeful. No one that understands any thing of the nature of man is ignorant of the power of hope. This one engine moves the world, and keeps all men busy. Every one soon finds his present state not perfectly good, and hopes some way to make it better; otherwise, the world were a dull scene. Endeavour would languish, or rather be none at all: for there were no room left for design, or a rational enterprising of any thing; but a lazy unconcerned trifling, without care which end goes forward, and with an utter indifference whether to stir or to sit still. Men are not, in their other designs, without hope, but their hope is placed upon things of no value; and when they have gained the next thing they hoped for and pursued, they are as far still as they were from what they meant that for. They have obtained their nearer end, but therein mistook their way, which they designed by it, to their further end. When they have attained to be rich, yet they are not happy; perhaps much farther from it than before. When they have preyed upon the pleasure they had in chase, they are still unsatisfied; it may be, guilty reflections turn it all to gall and wormwood. Many such disappointments might make them consider, at length, they have been out all this while, and mistaken the whole nature and kind of the good that must make them happy. They may come to think with themselves, ‘Somewhat

is surely lacking, not only to our present enjoyment, but to our very design: somewhat it must be without the compass of all our former thoughts, wherein our satisfying good must lie." God may come into their minds; and they may cry out, 'Oh! that is it; here it was I mistook, and had forgot myself.' Man once had a God! and that God had his temple, wherein he resided, and did converse with man: hither he must be invited back. Yea, but his temple lies all in ruin, long ago deserted and disused, forsaken upon provocation, and with just resentment; the ruin to be repaired by no mortal hand; the wrong done to be expiated by no ordinary sacrifice. All this imports nothing but despair. But let now Emmanuel be brought in; this *original temple* be offered to view, and the design and intent of it be unfolded and laid open, and what a spring of hope is here! Or what can now be awanting to persuade a wretched soul of God's willingness to return? Or being now sensible of his misery by his absence, to make it willing of his return; yea, and to contribute the utmost endeavour that all things may be prepared and put into due order for his reception? Or if any thing should be still awanting, it is but what may more work upon desire, as well as beget hope: and to this purpose, a narrower view of this *original temple* also serves; that is, it not only shows the possibility, but gives us opportunity to contemplate.

Secondly, The *loveliness* too of such a temple. For here is the fairest representation that ever this world had, or that could be had, of this most delectable object. The Divine holiness incarnate did never shine so bright. And we may easily apprehend the

great advantage of having so lively and perfect a model set before us of what we are to design and aim at. Rules and precepts could never have afforded so full a description, or have furnished us with so perfect an idea. He that goes to build a house must have the project formed in his mind before ; and he is to make a material house of an immaterial. So here, we may say, the real house is to be built out of the mental or notional one. It is true, indeed, when we have got into our minds the true and full idea or model of this temple, our greatest difficulty is not yet over : how happy were it if the rest of our work would as soon be done, and our hearts would presently obey our light ! If they were ductile and easy to yield and receive the stamp and impression that would correspond to a well enlightened mind ; if we could presently conform and become like to the notions we have of what we should be, if on the sudden our spirits did admit the habitual fixed frame of holiness whereof we sometimes have the idea framed in our minds, what excellent creatures should we appear. But though to have that model truly formed in our understandings be not sufficient, it is however necessary ; and although our main work is not immediately done by it, it can never be done without it. Truth is the mean of holiness : “ Sanctify them through thy truth.” God hath chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. Therefore it is our great advantage to have the most entire and full notion that may be of that temper and frame of spirit we should be of. When the charge was given Moses of composing the tabernacle, that movable temple, he had the perfect pattern



of it shown him in the mount. And to receive the very notion aright of this spiritual living temple requires a some-way prepared mind, purged from vicious prejudice and perverse thoughts, possessed with dislike of our former pollutions and deformities; antecedent whereto is a more general view of that frame whereunto we are to be composed, and then a more distinct representation is consequent thereon. As we find the prophet is directed first to show the people the house that they might be ashamed, whereupon it follows, if they be ashamed of all that they have done, then he must show them the form of the house, and the fashion thereof, and the goings out thereof, and the comings in thereof, and all the 'ordinances thereof. Ezek. xliii, 10, 11. How much would it conduce to the work and service of God's temple in us, if upon our having had some general intimation of his gracious propensions towards us, to repair our ruins and restore our forlorn decayed state, we begin to lament after him and conceive inward resentments of the impurities and desolations of our souls; and shall now have the distinct representation set before our eyes of that glorious workmanship which he means to express in our renovation! How taking and transporting a sight will this be to a soul that is become vile and loathsome in its own eyes, and weary of being as without God in the world! But now, wherein shall he be understood to give us so exact an account of his merciful intentions and design in this matter as by letting us see how his glory shone in his own incarnate Son, his express image, and then signifying his pleasure and purpose to have us conformed to the same image? This is his most apt and

efficacious method when he goes about to raise his new creation and erect his inner temple: "God, that commanded light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." That glory shines with greatest advantage to our transformation in the face or aspect of Emmanuel. When we set our faces that way and our eye meets his, we put ourselves into a purposed posture of intuition, and do steadily look to Jesus; "when we, with open face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." His very Spirit enters with those vital beams; enters at our eye, and is thence transfused through our whole soul.

The seed and generative principle of the new creature is truth: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but incorruptible, the word of God." We must understand it of practical truth, or that which serves to show what we are to be and do in our new and regenerate state. Hereby souls are begotten to God, hereby they live and grow, hereby they come and join, as living stones, to the living Corner-stone, in the composition of this spiritual house. Now we have this practical truth, not only exhibited in aphorisms and maxims in the word, but we have it exemplified in the life of Christ. And when the great renovating work is to be done, the old man to be put off, the new man to be put on, the spirit of our mind to be renewed, our business is to learn Christ and the truth as it is in Jesus; so is accomplished the formation of that new man that is after God. And when we become his workmanship,

we are created in Christ Jesus unto good works; caught into union with that Spirit which showed itself in the whole course of his conversation on earth, and is gradually to work and form us to an imitation of him. Whereunto we are not formed by mere looking on, or by our own contemplation only of his life and actions, on the one hand; nor on the other hand is our looking on useless and vain, as if we were to be formed, like mere stones, into dead unmoving statues, rather than living temples; or as if his Spirit were to do that work upon us by a violent hand while we know nothing of the matter, nor any way comply to the design. But the work must be done by the holding up of the representation of this *primary temple* before our eyes, animated and replenished with divine life and glory, as our pattern and the type by which we are to be formed, till our hearts be captivated and won to the love and liking of such a state; that is to be so united with God, so devoted to him, so stamped and impressed with all imitable godlike excellencies as he was: we are to be so enamoured herewith, as to be impatient of remaining what we were before. And such a view contributed directly hereto, and in a way suitable to our natures. Mere transient discourses of virtue and goodness seem cold and unsavoury things to a soul drenched in sensuality, sunk into deep forgetfulness of God, and filled with aversion to holiness: but the track and course of a life evenly transacted, in the power of the Holy Ghost, and that is throughout uniform and constantly agreeable to itself, is apt, by often repeated insinuations, insensibly to recommend itself as amiable, and gain a liking even with them that were most



opposite and disaffected. For the nature of man, in its most degenerate state, is not wholly destitute of the notions of virtue and goodness, nor of some faint approbation of them. The names of sincerity, humility, sobriety, meekness, are of better sound and import, even with the worst of men, than of deceit, pride, riot, and wrathfulness; nor are they wont to accuse any for those former things under their own names. Only when they see the broken and more imperfect appearances of them, and that they are rather offered at than truly and constantly represented in practice; this begets a prejudice, and the pretenders to them become suspected of hypocrisy or a conceited singularity, and are not censured as not being grossly evil, but rather that they are not thoroughly good. But when so unexceptionable a course is in constant view as our Saviour's was, this procures, even from the ruder vulgar, an acknowledgment that he doth all things well, and carries such lustre and awful majesty as to command a veneration and respect; yea, is apt to allure those that more narrowly observe into a real love both of him and his way; especially when it has such a close and issue as appear no way unworthy of himself or his former pretensions. But all being taken together, resolves into the plainest demonstration of most sincere devotedness to God and good-will to men, upon which the great stress is laid: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." And how great a thing is done towards our entire compliance with the Redeemer's design of making us temples to the living God, as he himself was, when he, under that very notion appears amiable in our eyes! How natural

and easy is imitation to love ! All the powers of the soul are now, in the most natural way, excited and set on work ; and we shall not easily be induced to satisfy ourselves or admit of being at rest till we attain a state with the loveliness whereof our hearts are once taken and possessed beforehand. But nothing of all this is said with design, nor hath any tendency to diminish or detract from that mighty power of the blessed Spirit of God, by whom men become willing of the return of the Divine presence into its ancient residence, and, in subordination, active towards it ; but rather to magnify the excellency of that wisdom which conducts all the exertions and operations of that power so suitably to the subject to be wrought upon, and the ends and purposes to be effected thereby.

Upon the whole, the setting up of this *original temple*, inscribed with the great name, *Emmanuel*, or the whole constitution of Christ the Mediator, hath, we see, a very apparent aptitude and rich sufficiency in its kind to the composing of things between God and men ; the replenishing this desolate world with temples again everywhere, and those with the Divine presence ; both as there was enough in it to procure remission of sin, enough to procure the emission of the Holy Spirit ; an immense fullness both of righteousness and Spirit—of righteousness for the former purpose, and of Spirit for the latter ; and both of these in distinct ways capable of being imparted, because the power of imparting them was upon such terms obtained as did satisfy the malediction and curse of the violated law, which must otherwise have everlastingly withheld both from apostate offending crea-

tures. It is not the righteousness of God, *as such*, that can make a guilty creature guiltless, or the Spirit of God, *as such*, that can make him holy. Here is a full fountain, but sealed and shut up; and what are we the better for that? But it is the righteousness and Spirit of *Emmanuel*, *God with us*; of him who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and who was made a curse for us that we might have the blessing of the promised Spirit, otherwise there were not in him a sufficiency to answer the exigency of the case; but as the matter is, here is abundant sufficiency in both respects, as we have already seen. And therefore the only thing that remains to be shown herein, is the *necessity* and requisiteness of such means as this to this end. For when we take notice of so great and so rare a thing as an Emmanuel set up in the world; and find by this solemn constitution of him by the condition of his person, his accomplishments, performances, sufferings, acquisitions, the powers and virtues belonging to him, that every thing hath so apt an aspect and is so accommodate to the restitution of lost man and of God's temple in and with him; we cannot but confess here is a contrivance worthy of God, sufficient for its end. So that the work need not fail of being done if in this way it prove not to be overdone; or if the apparatus be not greater than was needful for the intended end; or that the same purposes might not have been effected at an easier rate. I design therefore to speak distinctly and severally of the *necessity* of this course in reference to the remission of sin and to the emission or communication of the Spirit; and do purposely



reserve several things concerning this latter to be discoursed under this head; after the *necessity* of this same course for the former purpose hath been considered.

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## CHAPTER VI.

*The Necessity of this Constitution of Emmanuel to the Erecting of God's Temple in the World.*

I. It may here perhaps be said, ‘ Why might not the matter have been otherwise brought about? Or might not God of his mere sovereignty have remitted the wrong done to him without any such atonement, and upon the same account have sent forth his Spirit to turn men’s hearts? And if that must work by arguments and rational persuasives, were there no others to have been used sufficient to this purpose, though the Son of God had never become man or died upon this account? That to use means exceeding the value of the end, may seem as unsuitable to the Divine wisdom as not to have used sufficient. And who can think the concerns of silly worms impossible to be managed and brought to a fair and happy issue, without so great things as the incarnation and death of God’s own Son?’

II. The subject of the preceding chapter is therefore continued, in which we proceed to show,—

*Secondly*, The *necessity*, as the case stood, that this course should be taken for this end. No man can here think we mean that the end itself was other-

wise necessary, than as the freest love and good-will made it so; but *that* supposed, we are only to evince that this course was the necessary mean to attain it. And as to this, if indeed that modesty and reverence were every where to be found, wherewith it would become dim-sighted man to judge of the ways of God, any inquiry of this kind might be forborne; and it would be enough to put us out of doubt that this was the most equal and fittest way, that we see it is the way which God hath taken. But that cross temper hath found much place in the world, rather to dispute God's methods, than comport with them, in an obedient thankful compliance and subserviency to their intended ends. And how deeply is it to be resented, that so momentous a thing in the religion of Christians—and that above all others should be the subject and incentive of admiring, devout thoughts and affections—should ever have been made intricate and perplexed by disputation! That the food of life should have been filled with thorns and gravel! and what was most apt to beget good blood, and turn all to strength, vigour, and spirit, should be rendered the matter of a disease! This can never enough be taken to heart. What complaints might the tortured, famished church of Christ send up against the ill instruments of so great a mischief! 'Lord! we asked bread, and they gave us a stone! They have spoiled the provisions of thy house! Our pleasantest fare, most delicious and strengthening viands, they have made tasteless and unsavoury!' What expostulations might it use with them! 'Will you not let us live? Can nothing in our religion be so sacred, so important, as to escape your perverting hands?'

The urgency of the case itself permits not that this matter be silently passed over: a living temple needs the apt means of nourishment and growth; and it must be nourished and grow by what is suitable to its constitution: to which nothing is more inward than the laying this “living Corner-stone.”

We will acknowledge that the reasons of divers things in God’s determinations and appointments may be very deeply hidden, not only from our more easy view, but our most diligent search: where they are, his telling us, the matter is so or so, is reason enough to us to believe with reverence. But when they offer themselves, we need not be afraid to see them; and when the matter they concern is brought in question, should be afraid of being so treacherous as not to produce them.

Now, that it was requisite this temple should be so founded as hath been said, is a matter not only not repugnant to the common reason of man, but which fairly approves itself thereto; that is, so far as that, though it exceed all human thought, the great Lord of heaven and earth, infinitely injured by the sin of man, should so wonderfully condescend; yet when his good pleasure is plainly expressed, touching the end, that nothing could be so apparently congruous, so worthy of himself, so accommodate to his design, as the way which he hath avowedly taken to bring it about; that it might be brought about, a compliance was necessary, and a mutual yielding of both the distanced parties,—that is, that God consent to return to his desolate temple, and that man consent or be willing he should.

We have shown that the constitution and use of



the original temple was sufficient, and aptly conducing to both. Now, being to show wherein they were also requisite or necessary to the one and the other, we must acknowledge them not alike immediately necessary to each of these; and must therefore divide the things, in order to which this course was taken, and speak of them severally. Nor are they to be so divided, as though the procurement of God's return for his part, and of man's admitting thereof for his part, were throughout to be severally considered; for God's part is larger than man's, and some way runs into it: he is not only to give his own consent, but to gain man's; and besides his own willing return to repossess his temple, he is to make man willing also; or rather that return or repossession, rightly understood, will be found to include the making of man willing; that is, in that very return and repossession, he is to put forth that measure of power and influence by which he may be made so. All this is God's part, which he doth graciously undertake, and without which nothing could be effected in this matter; but then, because man is to be wrought upon in a way suitable to his reasonable nature, he is to have such things offered to his consideration, as in their own nature tend to persuade him, and which that power and spirit to be put forth may use as proper means to that purpose. Now, it is man's part to consider such things, and consent thereupon. Our business here, therefore, is to show how *necessary* the constitution of Emmanuel was, chiefly and principally as to what now appears to be God's part; and afterward to say somewhat as to our own;—to the former, it was requisite that the *original temple*, Em-

*manuel*, should be set up and be used to such immediate purposes as have been expressed; to the latter, was requisite the declaration hereof. To the one, that such a constitution should be; to the other, that it be made known to man.

1. In reference to God, this constitution was necessary, that so there might be a sufficient mean for the previous expiation of the offence done to the Divine majesty; or that the injurious violation of his sacred rights might be sufficiently recompensed. And here, more particularly, two things are to be cleared; namely, that in order to God's return, it was necessary such a full recompense should be made him, and that it could not be full any other way than this by Emmanuel. In discoursing of which things, it is not intended to go, in the usual way of controversy, to heap up a great number of arguments, and discuss particularly every little cavil that may be raised on the contrary part; but plainly to offer such considerations as may tend to clear the truth, and rather prevent than formally answer objections against it. Wherefore we say,

(1.) It was necessary God's return and vouchsafement of his gracious restored presence to man, as his temple, should be upon terms of recompense made him for the indignity and wrong done in the former violation thereof. Towards the evincing of which,

[1.] We do not here need to be curious in enquiring, whether the consideration of this recompense to be made had influence on the gracious purpose of God in this matter, or only on the execution thereof; nor indeed hath the doubt any proper ground in the

present case, which, where it hath disquieted the minds of any, seems to have proceeded from our too great aptness to measure God by ourselves, and prescribe to him the same methods we ourselves are wont to observe; that is, we find it is our way, when we have a design to bring about, upon which we are intent, first to propound the end to ourselves which we would have effected, then to deliberate and consult by what means to effect it; whereupon we assign to the blessed God the same course. But to him, all his works are known from the beginning of the world; and he ever beheld, at one view, the whole tract and course of means whereby any thing is to be done which he intends, with the intended end itself. So that we have no reason to affix to him any thought or purpose of favour towards the sinful sons of men, ancients or more early than his prospect of the way wherein that favourable purpose was to be accomplished.

Nor again can any act or purpose of his towards his creatures be otherwise necessary to him, than from the essential rectitude of the counsels of his own will; the determinations whereof are such as might not have been, or might have been otherwise, where the thing determined was, by those measures, a matter of indifferency. Where it was not so, they are in that sense most free; as they are directed and approved by his infinite wisdom, and attended with that complacency which naturally accompanies any act or purpose that is in itself most unexceptionably congruous, just, and good.

It may furthermore be truly said, that nothing ought to be reckoned possible to him, upon the agree-



ment only which it holds to some one attribute of his, considered singly and apart from all the rest; as, for instance, in what is next our present case, to forgive all the sins that were ever committed against him, without insisting upon any compensation, were vainly alleged to be correspondent to boundless sovereign mercy, if it will not as well accord with infinite wisdom, justice, and holiness; as it would be unreasonably said to be agreeably enough to him to throw all the creatures that never offended him into an endless nothingness, in consideration only of the absoluteness of his power and dominion. But whatsoever he can do must be understood to be agreeable to a Being absolutely and every way perfect.

Moreover we add, that whatsoever is most congruous and fit for him to do, that is truly necessary to him; he cannot swerve in the least tittle, we will not only say from what strict and rigorous justice doth exact and challenge, but also not from what is requisite, under the notion of most comely and decent. Hath it been said of a mortal man, that it was as easy to alter the course of the sun, as to turn him from the path of righteousness? We must suppose it of the eternal God equally impossible that he should be diverted from, or ever omit to do, what is most seemly, becoming, and worthy of himself. In such things wherein he is pleased to be our pattern, what we know to be our own duty, we must conclude is his nature; we ought to be found neither in an unjust act or omission, nor undecent one, and he cannot. And if it belong to us to do what is good, it more necessarily belongs to him to do what is best; that is, in all things that are any way capable of

coming under a moral consideration; for, as in other matters, it is permitted to us to act arbitrarily, so there is nothing hinders but he may much more. Wherefore it is not hence to be thought, that therefore it was necessary this universe, and every thing in it, should have been made as perfect as they could be; as if we ourselves will make any thing for our own use, nothing obliges us to be so very curious about it, as that it may be as neat and accurate as we can devise to make it, it will suffice if it be such as will serve our turn; and indeed, in the works of nature, it would have been less worthy of God to have expressed a scrupulous curiosity that nothing might ever fall out besides one fixed rule, that should extend to all imaginable particularities; as that all men should be of the comeliest stature, all faces of the most graceful aspect, with a thousand the like. But in matters wherein there can be better and worse, in a moral sense, it seems a principle of the plainest evidence, that the blessed God cannot but do that which is simply the best; yea, while a necessity is upon us, not only to mind things that are true, and just, and pure, but also that are lovely and of good report, we have no cause to doubt; but whatsoever is comely, and beseeming his most perfect excellencies, is an eternal, indispensable law to him; wherefore, it is not enough to consider, in the present case, what it were strictly not unjust for him to do, but what is fit and becoming so excellent and glorious a majesty as his.

Now how can it be a doubt, but that he only is the competent Judge of what is becoming and worthy of himself; or what is most congruous and fit in itself

to be done: “Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, hath instructed him?” &c. Surely the best reason we can exercise in this case, is to think that course reasonable which we find God hath chosen, although we had no insight at all into the matter. There are many constitutions which we have occasion to observe in the course of God’s government over the world, which, by the constancy of them, we have ground to think founded in indispensable necessity; though the reasons upon which they are necessary are most deeply latent and hidden from us. Not to speak of the abstruser paths and methods of nature, wherein while we observe a constancy, yet perhaps we apprehend it might have been some other way as well: perhaps it might, but it is more than we know. And though, as hath been said, we have reason to suppose that the ways God hath taken in matters of this sort may be more absolutely arbitrary, yet the constant iteration of the same thing, or continuation of the ancient settled course, shows the peremptoriness of the Creator’s counsel, and seems to carry with it an implied rebuke of our ignorant rashness, in thinking it might as well be otherwise; and a stiff asserting of his determinations against us. There are none so well studied naturalists, as to be able to give a rational account why it is so and so, in many instances; wherein they may yet discern the inflexibleness of nature, and perceive her methods to be as unalterable as they are unaccountable. It is true, this is obvious to be seen by any eye, that where things are well, as they are, constancy doth better than innovation or change; but it very much becomes human



modesty, to suppose that there may, in many cases, be other reasons to justify the present course, which we see not. But we may, with more advantage, consider the fixedness of that order which God hath set to the course of his dispensation towards his intelligent creatures, wherein we shall only instance in some few particulars.

As, first, that there is so little discernible commerce, in the present state, between the superior rank of these creatures and the inferior. That whereas we are well assured there are intelligent creatures, which inhabit not earthly bodies like ours, but hold an agreement with us in greater things; they yet so rarely converse with us. When we consider, that such of them as remain innocent, and such of us as are, by Divine mercy, recovered out of a state of apostacy, are all subject to the same common Lord; observe the more substantial things of the same law; have all the same common end; are actuated by the same principle of love, devotedness, and zeal for the interest and honour of the great Maker and Lord of all things. We are all to make up one community with them, and be associates in the same future blessed state; yet they have little intercourse with us—they shun our sight. If sometimes they appear, it is by transient, hasty glances; they are strangely shy and reserved towards us; they check our inquiries; put us, and appear to be themselves, in reference thereto, under awful restraints. We know not the reason of all this; sometimes we may think with ourselves, those pure and holy spirits cannot but be full of kindness, benignity, and love, and concerned for us poor mortals,

whom they see put to conflict with many difficulties and calamities; abused by the cunning malice of their and our enemy; imposed upon by the illusions of our own senses. How easily might they make many useful discoveries to us; relieve our ignorance in many things; acquaint us more expressly with the state of things in the other world; rectify our dark, or mistaken apprehensions, concerning many both religious and philosophical matters! But they refrain, and we know not why.

Again, that in the days of our Saviour's converse on earth there should be so strange a connexion, as to them on whom he wrought miraculous cures, between the Divine power and their faith; so that sometimes we find it expressly said, "He could do no mighty work, because of their unbelief."

And we lastly instance, in the fixedness of that course which God hath set for making known to the world the contents of the gospel of Christ; so that little is ever done therein, immediately or by extraordinary means. The apostle Paul is stopped in the career of his persecution, by an amazing voice and vision; but he is left for instruction, as to his future course, to Ananias. Unto Cornelius an angel is sent, not to preach the Gospel, but to direct him to send for Peter for that purpose. The Lord doth not immediately himself instruct the eunuch in the faith of Christ, but directs Philip to do it. And experience shows, that (according to the rule set in that case, Rom. x,) where they have no preachers, they have no gospel.

Now as to all these cases, and many more that might be thought on, can it be said it would have been un-

just if God had ordered the matter otherwise than he hath? *That* we cannot so much as imagine; nor are we to think the matter determined as it is, in all such cases, by mere will and pleasure, without a reason; which were an imagination altogether unworthy the supreme wisdom: but that there are reasons of mighty force and weight, or certain congruities, in the natures of things themselves, obvious to the Divine understanding, which do either wholly escape ours, or whereof we have but very shallow, dark, conjectural apprehensions; as he that saw men as trees, or as some creatures of very acute sight perceive what to us seems invisible. And yet those occult and hidden reasons and congruities have been the foundation of constitutions and laws, that hold things more steadily than adamantine bands, and are of more stability than the foundations of heaven and earth.

Furthermore, it is to be considered that the rights of the Divine government; the quality and measure of offences committed against it, and when or upon what terms they may be remitted; or in what case it may be congruous to the dignity of that government to recede from such rights; are matters of so high a nature, that it becomes us to be very sparing in making an estimate about them; especially a more diminishing one than the general strain of Scripture seems to hold forth. Even among men, how sacred things are majesty and the rights of government, and how much above the reach of a vulgar judgment! Suppose a company of peasants, that understand little more than what is within the compass of their mattock, plough, and shovel, should take upon them to judge of the rights of their prince, and make an estimate of the measure



of offences committed against the majesty and dignity of government, how competent judges would we think them ! And will we not acknowledge the most refined human understanding as incompetent to judge of the rights of the Divine government, or measure the injuriousness of an offence done against it, as the meanest peasant to make an estimate of these matters in a human government ? If only the reputation be wronged of a person of better quality, how strictly is it insisted on to have the matter tried by peers, or persons of equal rank ; such as are capable of understanding honour and reputation ! How would it be resented, if an affront put upon a nobleman should be committed to the judgment of smiths and cobblers, especially if they were *sharers in the crime*, and as well parties as judges.

When the regalia of the great Ruler and Lord of heaven and earth are invaded, his temple violated, his presence despised, his image torn down thence and defaced ; who among the sons of men are either great or knowing or innocent enough to judge of the offence and wrong, or how fit it is that it be remitted without recompense, or what recompense would be proportionable ? How supposable is it that there may be congruities in this matter, obvious to the Divine understanding, which infinitely exceed the measure of ours ?

[2.] And yet, because God speaks to us about these matters, and they are our own concerns, as being of the offending parties, it is necessary we apply our minds to understand them, and possible to us to attain to a true, though not to a full understanding of them. And though we can never

fully comprehend in our own thoughts the horror of the case, that reasonable creatures, made after God's image, so highly favoured by him; capable of blessedness in him, incapable of it any other way, should have arrived to that pitch of wickedness towards him, and unnaturalness towards themselves, as to say to him, "Depart from us," and cut themselves off from him; though we may sooner lose ourselves in the contemplation, and be overwhelmed by our own thoughts, than ever see through the monstrous evil of this defection, yet we may soon see it incomparably to transcend the measure of any offence that can ever be done by one creature against another, or of the most scandalous affront the meanest, the vilest, the most ungrateful, ill-natured wretch could have devised to put upon the greatest, the most benign, and best deserving prince the world ever knew. And if we can suppose an offence of that kind may be of so heinous a nature, and so circumstanced as that it cannot be congruous it should be remitted without some reparation made to the majesty of the prince, and compensation for the scandal done to government, it is easy to suppose it much more incongruous it should be so in the present case. Yea, and as it can never be thought congruous that such an offence against a human governor should be pardoned without the intervening repentance of the delinquent, so we may easily apprehend, also, the case to be such, as that it cannot be fit it should be pardoned upon that alone, without other recompense: whereof, if any should doubt, I would demand, Is it in any case fit, that a penitent delinquent against human laws and government

should be punished, or a proportionable recompense be exacted for his offence, notwithstanding? Surely it will be acknowledged ordinarily fit; and who would take upon him to be the censor of the common justice of the world in all such cases, or to damn the proceedings of all times and nations wheresoever a penitent offender hath been made to suffer the legal punishment of his offence, notwithstanding his repentance?

First, How strange a maxim of government would that be, That it is never fit an offender, of whatever kind, should be punished, if he repent himself of his offence! And surely if ever, in any case, somewhat else than repentance be fitly insisted on, as a recompense for the violation of the sacred rights of government, it may well be supposed to be so much more in the case of man's common delinquency and revolt from God.

Secondly: To which purpose it is further to be considered, that, in this case, the matter is much otherwise between God and man, than, for the most part, between a secular prince and a delinquent subject; that is, that pardon, be it ever so plenary, doth, as pardon, no more than restore the delinquent into as good a condition as he was in before. But what was, for the most part, the case before of delinquent subjects? There are very few that were before the prince's favourites, his intimate associates and friends, with whom he was wont familiarly to converse. Very often the condition of the offender was such before, that his pardon only saves him from the gallows—lets him live, and enjoy only the poor advantages of his former mean condition; and not always that either:



yea, or if he were one whose higher rank and other circumstances had entitled him to a nearest attendance on the person of the prince, and a daily conversation with him, it is possible he might be pardoned with limitation as to his life, or, it may be, further, to his estate, without being restored to the honours and offices about the person of the prince, which he held only by royal favour: for though princely compassion might extend so far as to let his offence be expiated by less than his utter ruin, yet also his prudent respect to the dignity of his government might not admit that a person, under public infamy, should have the liberty of his presence, intermingle with his counsels, or be dignified with more special marks of his favour and kindness. Whereas, in the restitution of man, inasmuch as before he was the temple and residence of the great King, where he afforded his most inward, gracious presence, the design is to restore him to the same capacity, and to as good condition as he was in before in these respects; yea, and not only so, but unspeakably to better his case, to take him much nearer to himself than ever, and into a more exalted state. In order to which, it was the more highly congruous that his offence be done away by a most perfect, unexceptionable expiation; that so high and great an advancement of the most heinous offenders might not be brought about upon other terms than should well accord with the majesty of his government over the world.

Here, therefore, let a comparative view be taken of the fearful malediction and curse of God's law upon the transgressors of it, and of the copious blessings of the Gospel; that thereupon we may the

more clearly judge how improbable it was there should be so vast a difference and translation between two so distant states, without atonement made for transgression of so high demerit, and so deeply resented.

As to the former, we are in the general told, that "Cursed is every one that continues not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them." Astonishing thing ! That he should curse me, who made me ! That my being, and a curse upon me, should proceed from the word and breath of the same sacred mouth ! Of how terrible import is his curse ! To be made an anathema, separate and cut off from God, and from all the dutiful and loyal part of his creation ! Driven forth from his delightful presence ! In the same breath, it is said to be the loathed wretch, Depart—accursed ! To be reduced to the condition of a vagabond on the earth, not knowing whither to go ! Naked of Divine protection from any violent hand ; yea, marked out for the butt of the sharpest arrows of his own indignation ! How voluminous and extensive is his curse ! reaching to all one's concerns in both worlds, temporal and eternal, of outward and inward man. To be cursed in one's basket and store, in the city and field, in going out and coming in ! Especially to have all God's curses and plagues meeting and centering in one's very heart, to be there smitten with blindness, madness, and astonishment ! How efficacious is this curse ! Not a faint, impotent wishing ill to a man, but under which he really wastes, and which certainly blasts, withers, and consumes him, and even turns his very blessings into curses ! How

closely adhering, as a garment wherewith he is clothed, and as a girdle with which he is girt continually! How secretly and subtilely insinuating, as water into his bowels and oil into his bones! And how deservedly doth it befall! The curse causeless shall not come; this can never be without a cause. If another curse me, it shows he hates me; if the righteous God do so, it signifies me to be in myself a hateful creature, a son and heir, not of peace, but of wrath and a curse. And the effect must be of equal permanency with its cause; so as that God is angry with the wicked every day, and rains upon them fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest, as the portion of their cup; indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, and continually growing into a treasure, against the day of wrath.

View, on the other hand, the copious, abundant blessing contained and conveyed in the Gospel. It is a call to blessing, that we may inherit a blessing: it discovers a state begun with the blessedness of having iniquity forgiven; a course, under a continued blessing, of meditating on the word of God with delight day and night; of being undefiled in the way: gives characters of the subjects of blessings showered down from the mouth of Christ on the poor in spirit, pure in heart, the meek, merciful, &c.; aims at making them nigh that were afar off; taking them into God's own family and household; making them friends, favourites, domestics, sons, and daughters; engaging them in a fellowship with the Father and Son: yet were all these the children of wrath by nature. Whence is this change? A regression became not



the Majesty of heaven. God's original constitution, that connected sin and the curse, was just; he abides by it, reverses it not. To have reversed it was not to have judged the offenders, but himself; but having a mind to show men mercy, he provides for the expiation of sin, and salving the rights of his government, another way—by *transferring* guilt and the curse, not *nulling* them.

Thirdly: Whereupon we may also see what made atonement for sin so fundamental to a design of grace; the magifying the divine law; the asserting the equity and righteousness of the supreme government; not, as some odiously suggest, the gratifying of what, with us, is wont to go for a private appetite of revenge, from which the support of the honour and dignity of the government is most remote: yea, it were horrid to suppose that any such thing can have place with the blessed God, which is one of the most odious things in the disposition of lapsed, degenerate man—an aptness to take complacency in the pains and anguish of such as have offended us; unto which purpose, how feelingly would a malicious, ill-minded man, oftentimes utter the sense of his heart, and say, 'O the sweetness of revenge!' So black a thought of God will be most remote from every pious breast, or that is capable of savouring real goodness. Nor doth any precept, within the whole compass of that revelation which he hath given us, express more fully, at once, both our duty and his own nature, than that of loving our enemies, or of forgiving men their trespasses. There is, perhaps, somewhere to be found among men that benign, generous temper of mind, as, when an enemy is perfectly within one's power,

to be able to take a real solace in showing mercy; when he is in a fearful, trembling expectation, and hath even yielded himself a prey to revenge, to take pleasure in surpassing him by acts of kindness and compassion: one that can avow the contrary sentiment to the spirit of the world, and to them who so emphatically say, ‘How sweet is revenge!’ and can with greater *pathos* oppose to it *that*, as the undisguised sense of his soul, ‘O but how much sweeter is it to forgive!’ Than which, there is nowhere to be seen a more lively resemblance of God; a truer and more real part of his living image, who hath commanded us to love our enemies; if they hunger, to feed them; to bless them that curse us; to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us; that we may be his children, that we may show ourselves born of him, and to have received from him a new, even a divine nature, one truly agreeable to and resembling his own: and to whom, therefore, the acts and operations that naturally proceed from this temper of spirit are more grateful and savoury than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifice. So are we to frame our conceptions of the ever-blessed God, if either we will take the rationally coherent and self-consistent idea of an absolutely perfect Being, or his own frequent affirmations who best understands his own nature, or the course of his actual dispensations towards a sinful world, for our measure of him.

Fourthly: But is it a difficulty to us to reconcile with all this such frequent expressions in the sacred volume as import a steady purpose that all the sins of men shall be answered with an exactly proportionable measure of punishment? That every transgres-

sion shall have a just recompense of reward? That death is the stated wages of sin? Or do we find ourselves more perplexed how to understand, consistently with such declarations of his merciful nature, those passages which sometimes also occur, that seem to intimate a complacential vindictiveness, and delight taken in punishing—the Lord is “jealous, the Lord revengeth:” yea, that he seems to appropriate it as peculiar to himself—“Vengeance is mine, and I will repay it:” that “indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, shall be upon every soul of man that doeth evil: that speak of his laying up sin, sealing it among his treasures; of his waiting for a day of recompenses; of his whetting his glittering sword, his making his bow ready, and preparing his arrows on the string; of his being refreshed by acts of vengeance, his satiating of his fury, and causing it here-upon to rest, as having highly pleased and satisfied himself therewith. If any thing alien to the Divine nature, and disagreeable to the other so amiable discoveries of it, be thought imported in such expressions, let it only be considered, first, what must be allowed to be their import; and next, how well so much will agree with a right conception of God.

For the former, it is not necessary that such expressions be understood to intend more, and it seems necessary they be not understood to import less, than a constant, calm, dispassionate, complacential will, so far to punish sin as shall be necessary to the ends of his government. That they do import a will to punish is evident; for they are manifest expressions of anger, whereof we can say nothing more gentle than that it is a will to punish. It cannot signify



punishment without that will. For though the word anger, or wrath, be sometimes used in Scripture for the punishment itself, yet even then that will is supposed, otherwise what is said to be punishment were an unintended accident; and then how were it a punishment? Much less can it signify only God's declaration of his will to punish, excluding that will itself; for then what is it a declaration of? or what doth it declare? Surely we will acknowledge it a true declaration; then it cannot be the declaration of nothing, but must have somewhat in God correspondent to it, namely, the will which it declares. Which being plain, that it be also,

Fifthly, A dispassionate will, accompanied with nothing of perturbation; that it be a constant will, in reference to all such occasions, wherein the sacredness of the Divine government, violated, requires such reparation; and without any change, the most acknowledged perfection of the Divine nature doth manifestly not admit only, but require. For that such a calm, sedate, steady, fixed temper of mind in a magistrate is an excellency, even common reason apprehends; therefore it is said by a noted Pagan, that judges ought to be *like the laws themselves*; which are moved by no passion, yet inflexible: and then where can such an excellency have place in highest perfection but in the blessed God himself? Yea, and that it be also a complacential will, as some of the expressions above recited seem to import, may very well be admitted, if we rightly conceive and state in our own minds the thing willed by it; that is, the preserving the honour and dignity of the supreme government. Indeed, simply to take pleasure in the pain and misery

of another, is so odd and unnatural a disaffection, that it is strange how it can have place any where; and where it seems to have place among men, though too often it really hath so in more monstrously vicious tempers, yet, with many others, the matter may perhaps be somewhat mistaken; as that pleasure may possibly not be taken in the afflicted person's mere suffering for itself, but only as it is an argument or evidence of the other's superiority, wherein he prides himself, especially if he before misdoubted his own power, and that there hath been a dispute about it, which is now only thus decided: for then a secret joy may arise unto the prevailing party, upon his being delivered from an afflicting fear of being so used himself: and whereas he took it for a disparagement that the other did so far lessen and diminish him in his own thoughts, as to suppose or hope he should prove the stronger; a pleasure is now taken in letting him feel and have so sensible a demonstration of his error.

Sixthly: But that wherewith we must suppose the blessed God to be pleased, in the matter of punishing, is the congruity of the thing itself, that the sacred rights of his government over the world be vindicated; and that it be understood how ill his nature can comport with any thing that is impure; and what is in itself so highly congruous, cannot but be the matter of his delectation. He takes eternal pleasure in the reasonableness and fitness of his own determinations and actions, and rejoices in the works of his own hands, as agreeing with the apt, eternal schemes and models which he hath conceived in his most wise and all-comprehending mind: so that though he desireth not the death of sinners, and hath no delight

in the sufferings of his afflicted creatures, which his immense goodness rather inclines him to behold with compassion, yet the true ends of punishment are so much a greater good than their ease and exemption from the suffering they had deserved, that they must rather be chosen, and cannot be eligible for any reason, but for which also they are to be delighted in; that is, a real goodness and conducibleness to a valuable end inherent in them. Upon which account the just execution of the Divine pleasure in the punishment of insolent offenders is sometimes spoken of under the notion of a solemn festival, a season of joy, yea even of a sacrifice, as having a fragrancy or delectable savour in it. But whereas some of the above mentioned expressions do seem to intimate a delight in satisfying a furious vindictive appetite, we are to consider that what is spoken for the warning and terror of stupid besotted men, was necessarily to be spoken with some accommodation to their dull apprehension of the things which they yet see and feel not. For which purpose the person is put on sometimes of an enraged mighty man, the terror of which representation is more apprehensible to vulgar minds than the calm deliberate proceedings of magistratical justice, it being many times more requisite that expressions be rather suited to the person spoken to, though they be somewhat less exactly square with the thing itself intended to be spoken.

Wherefore, this being all that we have any reason to understand imported in such texts of Scripture as we before mentioned, namely, a calm and constant will of preserving the Divine government from contempt by a due punishment of such as do offer inju-



rious affronts to it ; and that takes pleasure in itself, or is satisfied with the congruity and fitness of its own determination ; what can there be in this unworthy of God ? What that disagrees with his other perfections ? Or that the notion of a Being every way perfect doth not exact and claim as necessarily belonging to it ? For to cut off this from it were certainly a very great maim to the notion of such a Being if we consider him as invested with the right and office of supreme rector or ruler of the world. For if you frame such an idea of a prince as should exclude a disposition to punish offenders, who would not presently observe in it an intolerable defect ? Suppose Xenophon to have given this character of his Cyrus : That he was a person of so sweet a nature that he permitted every one to do what was good in his own eyes ; if any one put indignities upon him, he took no offence at it ; he dispensed favours alike to all—even they they that despised his authority, invaded his rights, attempted the subversion of his government, with the disturbance and confusion of all that lived under it, had equal countenance and kindness from him, as they that were most observant of his laws and faithful to his interest ; and it were as safe for any one to be his sworn enemy as his most loyal and devoted subject. Who would take this for a commendation, or think such a one fit to have swayed a sceptre ? Can there be no such thing as goodness without the exclusion and banishment of wisdom, righteousness, and truth ? Yea, it is plain they not only consist with it, but that it is a manifest inconsistency it should be without them. The several virtues of a well instructed mind, as they all concur to make up one

entire frame, so they do each of them cast a mutual lustre upon one another; much more is it so with the several excellencies of the Divine Being. But how much too low are our highest and most raised thoughts of the Supreme Majesty! How do we falter when we most earnestly strive to speak and think most worthily of God and suitably to his excellent greatness.

Seventhly: If the justice of a human government requires such a recompense, much more is it required by that of the Divine government.

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## CHAPTER VII.

*God's rights so unalienable that he cannot quit them to his wrong. A sufficient recompense on this account necessary.*

WE must also acknowledge a vast difference between God's government over his intelligent creatures, and that of a secular prince over his subjects; and are thereupon to enquire, Whether the notion of justice, as it is applied to the one government and the other, can be the same? A secular ruler is set up and established purposely for the good of the community, as the more principal end of his constitution. The people are not formed for him, but he for them; whence the administration of justice is a public and common right, wherewith he is intrusted by the Supreme Ruler for them, in order to the common good. Well, therefore, may his decrees and edicts go in

this form, and have this for their chief scope and end ; *Let the state receive no injury.* And hence the neglect duly and seasonably to animadvert upon offenders is a violation of the public justice committed to his management, for which he is accountable to him that intrusted him ; it is a wrong done to the community of whose rights he is the appointed guardian. And whereas such offences as more directly strike at his crown and dignity, as treason or rebellion, seem more principally leveled against himself and his own rights, so is the legal punishment of them to be more at his arbitrament whether to inflict or not inflict it ; because it may seem in any one's power to dispense with or recede from his own rights. Yet, indeed, if the matter be more narrowly scanned, the relaxation of these should be in reason less in his power than of any other, because they more directly affront that Supreme Ruler whom he represents, and threaten the dissolution of the government which is the principal civil good of the whole community and the benefits whereof are their highest right. If violence be done to a private subject, the impunity of the offender would be a public wrong, because it remotely tends, by the badness of the example, to the hurt of the whole community. But in this case, without any such circulation, all the rights of the community are immediately struck at together in their central knot and juncture ; wherefore here most of all the prince is debtor to the community. But now the great Lord and Ruler of the world owes his own creatures nothing ; he is, by his goodness, inclined to take care of them and preserve common order among them ; but not owing them any thing, except by his own word, he



makes himself a debtor, he cannot be said to wrong the community by not providing that punishments be inflicted upon delinquents according to demerit. What he can be understood originally to owe herein, he owes only to himself; whence also the notion of justice, which we herein attribute to him, seems very different from that which belongs to human governments, which, though it allows not the disposal of another's right to his prejudice, forbids not the remitting of one's own.

Whereas, therefore, a thing may be said to be *just*, in a two-fold sense—either *negative*, as it is that which justice does not disapprove, or *positive*, as that whereto also justice doth oblige—it is hereupon a question of great moment, Whether God's will to punish sinners, antecedent to his legal constitution to that purpose, were just in the former sense only, or also in the latter. Can we say God had been unjust in not so determining? Whose rights had he violated in willing otherwise? Not man's—to whom he did owe nothing. Will he say his own? But *to him who consents no wrong is done*; which maxim doth not set us at liberty absolutely to do whatsoever we will with ourselves and what is ours, because of others whose rights are complicated with ours, the chief Ruler and Lord of all especially who hath principal interest in us and all that we have. Yet it holds even as to us; for though we may injure others, God especially, by an undue disposition of our properties which he intrusts us with, not for ourselves only, but for himself chiefly and for other men, whom therefore, in the second place, we may wrong by disabling ourselves to do them that good which we ought, and

though we may also prejudice ourselves, yet, ourselves apart, we cannot be said so far to wrong by our own consent as to be able to resume our right, because by that consent we have quitted and even forfeited the right which for ourselves we had. But as to God, who has no superior nor owes any thing to any one, whom can he be thought to wrong, by departing from any of his own rights?

Inasmuch therefore as justice, in the common and most general notion of it, is ever wont to be reckoned conversant about *the good of others*, even that to which they have a right; it seems not intelligible how justice, according to this usual notion of it, could primarily oblige God to inflict deserved punishment upon transgressors if he had not settled a legal constitution to this purpose, and declared that this should be the measure of his proceedings herein; both because it is so little conceivable how the punishments of the other state, which we are chiefly to consider, can be a good to them who do not suffer them, as we are sure they can be none to them that do; and also that it is not to be understood how, if they were, they could otherwise have any right thereto than by that constitution by which he now undertakes the part of a Governor, ruling according to known and established laws.

Yet it is very plain, that, for the actual infliction of such punishments, holy Scripture speaks of it not merely as a concomitant of justice, or as that which may consist with it, but as an effect which the apostle plainly signifies, (2 Thes. i, 6,) when he tells it is with God “a righteous thing,” that must be not only what justice doth admit but exact, *to recompense*

tribulation to the troublers of his people, &c. And when we are told, Rom. ii, 6, that God *will render* (or recompense) to every one according to his works, even in the day which is called “the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God; and that it is said the world was to become *guilty*, we read, *liable to be impleaded* before God, Rom. iii, 19. And again, (chap. xii, 19,) that *vengeance* is said to belong to him, and he will repay; with many more passages of like import.

But to carry the matter higher; it being evident it is that which justice doth require, to punish sin, according to such a constitution once made; yet all this while, how the constitution was any necessary effect of justice appears not. Nor are we helped by the common notion of justice herein, and are therefore cast upon the inquiry, Whether any other notion of justice be fitly assignable according to which it may be understood to have required the making that constitution itself?

It is here to be considered whence or from what fountain any man or community of men come to have right to any thing. It cannot be but that the Fountain of all being must be the Fountain of all rights. From whence things, absolutely considered, descend, all the relations that result must also descend. There can therefore be no pretence of right to any thing among creatures but from God; He, as the Sovereign Proprietor and Lord of all, settles such and such rights in creatures, which they hold and retain dependently on him, upon terms and according to rules which he hath prescribed; so as that by transgression men may forfeit such rights, or, by consent



and mutual contracts, transfer them to one another. Whereupon they have no unalienable rights, none whereof they may not be divested either by their default or consent ; sometimes by both together, as by a faulty consent. And indeed if it be by the former it must be by the latter ; because no man is supposed to commit a fault against his will. But it may be by the latter without the former as none can doubt but one may innocently divest himself in many cases of his own present right ; otherwise there could be no such thing in the world as either gift or sale. And hence it comes to pass, that the justice which is inherent in any man comes to be conversant about the rights of another, not his own ; so far as to oblige him not to intrench upon the rights of another, while yet it does not forbid him to dispose of his own, as they are merely his. And there is no such thing as justice towards a man's self, so inhibiting him as to make his act in that kind invalid, when he hath done it, only because he hath thereby wronged himself, or which he can afterwards allege against his own act or deed. For he hath no other rights in any thing than what are derived from the Supreme Proprietor, measurable by his rules, which, so far as man is concerned, are not unalienable ; yea, justice obliges, if he swear to his own hurt, not to change. Psal. xv.

But now, with the Supreme Proprietor, there cannot but be unalienable rights, inseparably and everlastingly inherent in him ; for it cannot be but that He that is the Fountain of all rights must have them primarily and originally in himself ; and can no more so quit them, as to make the creature absolute and independent, than he can make the creature God.

Wherefore, though with man there can be no such thing as justice towards oneself, disabling him to forego his own rights, the case cannot but be quite otherwise as to God, and for the same reason for which it cannot agree to man, because man hath none but borrowed and alienable rights, which he can forego to his own prejudice, and God hath none that he can so part with. Hereupon, therefore, God did owe it to himself *primarily* as the absolute Sovereign and Lord of all, not to suffer indignities to be offered him without animadverting upon them, and therefore to determine he would do so.

But withall, he having undertaken the part of a legal Governor, and to rule by established laws which should be the stated measures of sin and duty, of punishments and rewards, hereby common order was to be preserved in the governed community ; and having published his constitution in his word and otherwise, sufficiently to that purpose, he hath hereby, *secondarily*, made himself debtor to the community, and by his constitution given men some right to the benefit of that order which was to be maintained among them by these means ; which benefit they do here in this present state actually partake in some measure, and might in a greater measure if they were more governable, or would regard and be awed more by the laws of their great and rightful Ruler and Lord. Wherefore though men have no benefit by the punishments of the future state, they have, or might have, by the feared commination of them, which neglected, made the actual infliction of them necessary. Nor had they the only probable benefit of present order hereby, but of a future well-being ;

it being the design of that, as of all the comminations of wise and good rulers, to prevent the desert of the threatened punishment, and consequently the punishment itself. And though men could have no right to any such benefit before the constitution; yet it is not inconceivable, that by it they might have some—namely, an inferior and secondary right.

Wherefore the blessed God, by making the legal constitution, which he will have to stand as the measure of his government, hath not added to his own right to govern and punish as there is cause; for it was natural, and needed nothing to support it. The constitution rather limits than causes his right, which depends not on it, but gives rise to it rather. He gives assurance by it of his equal dealing, and that he will not lay upon man more than is right, that he should enter into judgment with God, Job, xxxiv, 12, 23. And whereas he hath been pleased to publish his constitution, in the form of a covenant, variously attempered to the different states of men, nothing accrues to him by their stipulating with him thereupon. He is their governor, as he is their Maker; not at their choice, which in propriety the case admits not, there being no competitor that pretends against him; but is only a loyal, dutiful consent, or recognising his former right. They that consent to it do therefore more deeply oblige themselves to their own duty, and entitle themselves to his covenanted favours; but can entitle him to nothing, for their all was his before: his contract shows his condescension, not defective title. And this his antecedent, original right, that peculiar excellency of his nature, his justice to himself inviolably preserves,



as the faithful guardian of all his sacred rights. So that when he undertakes the part of a legal Governor, it indispensably necessitates his doing whatsoever is requisite for supporting the honour and dignity of his government: and can permit nothing that shall detract from it, or render it less august and awful.

Yet need we not here over scrupulously defend the common notion of justice, in the utmost strictness of it, that makes it conversant only about another's right, and seems therefore to imply that a man can owe nothing to himself. That love to others, which comprehends all our duty to them, is to be measured by love to ourselves, which seems equally comprehensive of duty which we are supposed to owe to ourselves. Nor shall we dispute whether, in no sense, one can be both creditor and debtor; or whether insobriety be not properly unrighteousness, and sobriety justice, even towards oneself; subordination to God being still preserved, under whom, and for whom, only we can owe any thing to ourselves or others. Only supposing, among men, such a thing as self-justice, it is with them a weaker and more debile principle, that may betray and lose their rights, which then no justice can reclaim. Whereas, with God, it is, as all other excellencies are, in highest perfection, and hath always the force with him of an eternal and immutable law.

And if any should imagine this to detract from the absoluteness of God's dominion and sovereignty, and set him in this respect beneath his own creatures, that whereas *they* can quit their rights, it should be supposed *he* cannot forego his; it is answered, It hath not been said, that God can forego none of his

own rights; it is plain he doth, when, having the right to punish a sinner, he by pardon confers upon him right to impunity: but he cannot do it to the prejudice and dishonour of his glorious excellencies, and the dignity of his government. And therefore, if some preparation were requisite to his doing it, consistently with the due honour and reputation thereof, justice towards himself required he should insist upon it; which is no more a detraction from his absoluteness, than that he cannot lie, or do any thing unworthy of himself. He is so *absolute*, that he can do whatever he pleases; but so *just*, that he cannot be pleased to do an unrighteous thing.

But besides that stricter notion of God's justice, as it is conversant about, and conservative of, his own rights; we may also consider it in a larger and more comprehensive notion, as it includes his several moral attributes and excellencies, and answers to that which among men is called *universal justice*, and reckoned to contain in it all virtues. For so taken, it comprehends his *holiness*, and perfect detestation of all impurity, in respect whereof he cannot but be perpetually inclined to animadvert with severity upon sin; both because of its irreconcilable contrariety to his holy nature, and the insolent affront which it therefore directly offers him; and because of the implicit, most injurious misrepresentation of him which it contains in it, as if he were either kindly or more indifferently affected towards it: upon which accounts, we may well suppose him to esteem it necessary for him, both to constitute a rule for punishing it, and to punish it accordingly; that he may both truly *act* his own nature, and truly *represent* it.

And again, if we take the notion of his justice in this latitude, it will comprehend his governing *wisdom*; the part of which attribute it is, to determine and direct the doing whatsoever is fit to be determined and done; as it is the part of his righteousness to resolve upon and execute whatever the rules of justice do require and call for. It is the judge of decencies, or what it is meet and becoming him, as the Lord and Ruler of the world, to do or not do; and a very reasonable account might be given of this matter. There are many just laws made by human legislators, to the making whereof, though justice (in the stricter sense) did not rigidly oblige them, so that they had been unjust if they had not made them, yet this other principle, of equal importance to government, and which also doth not altogether refuse the name of justice, might require the making them, and would not be well comported with by omitting to make them.

Hereupon, therefore, if it should be enquired, Was it antecedently to the making of this constitution an indifferent thing with God, whether to determine sin should be punished or not? I answer, even upon this ground, No; it was not indifferent, but indispensably necessary. Any thing is with him necessary, as he is the Supreme Governor, that is upon a prudential account most fit and conducive to the ends of government. An antecedent necessity we might therefore assert, such as not only arises from his justice, most strictly taken, but his wisdom also; whose part it is to judge of congruities, as it is the part of strict justice to determine matters of right. Nor is it unfit to say, Wisdom is the chief principle exercised in making laws, justice in governing ac-



cording to laws already made. I say, the *chief*; for justice hath that part [in legislation too which hath been assigned it, as wisdom hath also its part in the consequent administration. And what can be more necessary to the great God, than to do ever what is most becoming and worthy of himself? And what could have been so becoming of him, as to let it appear to the world how sacred the rights of his empire over it are! how horrid a thing the defection of a reasonable creature is from the great Author and Lord of its life and being! how costly an expiation it did require! how solemn rites were to be performed! how great and awful transactions, that sin might become pardonable! What could so tend to exalt majesty, to magnify the reputation of his government, to possess his reasonable creatures with awful apprehensions, and make them dread to offend? In a prudent government, how great a thing is reason of state! Even where there is the greatest inclination imaginable to be in all things most strictly and unexceptionably just, yet is that the only care with prudent governors, that they may be able to approve the justice of their administrations? There are many things, which, without transgressing particular rules of justice, might have been omitted, from which yet, upon mere reason of state, you can no more make them swerve one ace, than you can remove the earth from its centre, or change the ordinances of day and night; and whereas that hath place in all things that tend to the keeping up the reputation and grandeur of government, where can it claim to have place with equal right as here? Whereupon we may, with greatest assurance, assert, that in things which

have this reference, it is equally impossible to the absolute perfection of the divine nature, that God should do an inept or unfit thing, as an unjust. And whereas his righteousness is the directive principle, in respect of equity or iniquity; so is his wisdom, of congruity and incongruity, decency and indecency; and that it is equally necessary to him to do what is most worthy of himself, and most becoming his excellent greatness, as what is most strictly just. Therefore, that when his most transcendent greatness is represented in terms as high and great as could come under human conception, (Heb. ii, 10,) *He*, namely, *for whom are all things*, and *by whom are all things*; it is considered what was most becoming of him as such: and determined that it became Him, for and by whom all things were, since there was one that had undertaken for sinners, to be the Prince or Prefect over the great affair of their salvation, especially being to make them, of rebels, sons, and as such, bring them to glory, out of the meanest and most abject state; that he should not be made perfect, (not be duly initiated into his great office, or not be complete master of his design), otherwise than by his own intervening suffering. Meaner persons might do as became their meaner condition; but He, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, must do as best became the most glorious greatness of Him, who is the first and the last, the author and the end of all things!

We are prone to confine our apprehensions of things to our own narrow sphere, that have reference also to another besides, and greater than ours. If God had no creatures but man, capable of govern-

ment by laws, the case had been much other than it is; for, considering that men have all been in one common case of apostacy and condemnation, they who should be restored to favour and a happy state should have no reason to look strangely upon one another, whatsoever the way and terms were of their restitution, being all dealt with alike. But we are to design a larger field and scene for our thoughts, and to consider, that besides men that shall be restored from a fallen and lapsed state, there are numberless myriads of pure and loyal spirits that never fell, and with whom restored men are to make one entire happy community for ever. Now we are to consider what aspect the matter would have in their eyes, if not a single person or two, but so vast a multitude, (and not guilty of some light transient offence only, but of insolent, malicious enmity and rebellion against the Divine government, propagated and transmitted from age to age, through all the successions of time, should be brought in upon them to partake in the dignities and blessedness of their state, without any reparation made of so great and continuing an injury! Though their perfect subjection in all things to the good pleasure of God would not allow them to be exceptions, and apt to censure his doings or determinations, yet also his most perfect wisdom and exact judgment, and knowledge of what is in itself most fit, could much less admit he should do any thing liable to be censured by his creatures as less fit. And no doubt so large and capacious intellects may well be supposed to penetrate far into the reason and wisdom of his dispensations; and so not only to exercise submission,



in an implicit acquiescence in the unseen and only believed fitness of them, but also to take an inexpressible complacency and satisfaction in what they manifestly discern thereof, and to be able to resolve their delectation in the ways and works of God into a higher cause and reason than the mere general belief that he doth all things well; namely, their immediate, delightful view of the congruity and fitness of what he does. When they behold the apostasy and revolt of the sons of men expiated by one of themselves, but with whom the Divine nature, in his own Son, was so intimately united, that the atonement made was both fit, as from them, and adequate as to him: this they cannot but behold with complacential approbation and admiration; for, no doubt, he made creatures of such a capacity, with a design to gratify the understandings he gave them, by approving and recommending the exactness and accuracy of his methods thereto; otherwise, a far lower measure of intellectual ability, in these creatures, had answered the Creator's purpose as well. They certainly cannot but approve that way he hath taken, for itself; and do doubtless stoop down to look into it, not with less complacency than wonder; it being, in the congruity of it, as suitable to their bright and clear intellects, being revealed, as for the strange contrivance thereof it had been altogether above them, if it had not been revealed. They cannot, when they behold a full, glorious vindication of the offence and wrong done to their common Lord, and the dignity of his government, by his revolted creatures, antecedent to the reception of any of them into grace and favour, but highly admire the lovely comeliness

and congruity of his whole dispensation, and express their pleasant resentments, by bearing a part with the redeemed society in such strains of praise, such admirations and applauses as these:—"Holy and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy judgments, thou King of nations and of saints!"

Upon the whole, there appears sufficient reason to conclude, not only upon the account of justice more strictly taken, but also of congruity and fitness, or according to such a larger notion of justice as imports an inflexible propension to do what is fit and congruous to be done, it was indispensably necessary the holy God should, in order to his return to his temple among men, insist to have a recompense made for the wrong that was done him by the violation of it. Nor let this be understood to detract from, but add to, what hath been above discoursed of justice, taken in a most strict sense, and most appropriate to God, as it is, primarily and in the first place, conservative of his own most sacred rights; which must be, by consequence, vindictive of the violation of them: and this is the original justice, (as his are the original rights, and the fountain of all order,) and must have had place, though he had settled no express constitution of government. And also as, secondarily, it is conservative of the rights of the governed community, which, by the constitution once settled, accrue to it.

Whereupon also it may be understood, in what sense punishments, passively taken, are to be accounted *debts*. And it is fitter to distinguish, and thereupon to explain, how they are or are not so,

than at random to deny they are so at all, when our Lord hath taught us to pray, “Forgive us our debts;” and when it is so plain in itself, that he who by delinquency hath forfeited his life, is most truly said to owe it to justice. Yea, and when, though the *creditor pænæ*—*he who has a right to punish* is said not to be so easily assignable, yet no doubt at all is made concerning the debtor; for how absurdly should he be said to be a debtor that owes no debt! Therefore punishments are not of the nature of those debts that, according to the rules of commutative justice, arise by contract between man and man; and which, as they arise by consent between the two covenanting parties, may as well cease by consent. But nothing hinders, but they may be such debts as are to be estimated by the distributive justice of rulers, whereof we must either say, that of some, justice doth oblige human and secular rulers to exact the punishment; or else, that magistratical justice would allow the remitting of all, and that no offences of any kind be ever at all punished. But if the justice of any secular rulers oblige them to punish some offenders, then most of all that of the supreme and most absolute Ruler and Lord of all, whose rights are natural, and depend not on our consent, or any contact with us, any more than our consent was previous to our coming into being, or our becoming his creatures; and whose justice must be more concerned to protect and vindicate his rights, than that of any earthly governor can be to preserve the rights of even the most considerable community: no community, nor all taken together, nor even the whole creation, being of any comparable value with the interest of the supreme and universal



Ruler, of himself alone; in respect of whom all nations are as the “drop of the bucket,” &c., especially if we add, that the rights of the greatest, even the universal community of all mankind, are involved with his own, and that their common peace and order are to be preserved by punishments, even eternal ones, not as executed, but as threatened: which, as hath been said, made the execution necessary, where the terms and method of remission are not complied with.

And whereas it is reckoned difficult to assign the *creditor pænæ*, the reason of that is not difficult to be assigned, if we consider what the true notion of a creditor is. And it is not taken *passively*, for him who is intrusted with another's rights, at least is not so to be limited; inasmuch as a man may be more properly creditor of what is his own than of what is another's; but *actively*, for one who trusts another. But the *debitor pænæ*—*he who is liable to punishment*, is not intrusted with any thing, but is only to be punished when he can be met with, and duly brought thereto; and therefore is not bound to offer himself to punishment, as another debtor is to pay what he owes: he is to be active in the solution; the delinquent passive only: whence *dare pœnas* is rightly interpreted to *suffer punishment*. And that this is all he is obliged to is plain, if we consider that it is not the precept of the law that in this case obliges him, which only obliges to the doing of duty; but the annexed commination, which can only oblige to undergo punishment.

*Creditor* indeed is chosen as a fit word to express the correlative unto *debitor pænæ*; but by it we are to understand no more than only the object of this

solution : so in human governments, the *governor* is improperly, namely, as he is intrusted with the rights of the community. But in the divine government, God himself, originally and radically, as he is Maker and Lord of all ; immediately and formally, as he is the Supreme Ruler, and such a one therefore as governs principally, for himself, not for others. For he cannot but be his own supreme end ; that he also doth undertake the care of the concerns and good of others, is of mere vouchsafement and condescension, not from any antecedent obligation so to do.

The sum of all therefore is, that whether we take divine justice in the larger sense, as it comprehends all the moral excellencies that relate to the government of God over man, especially his wisdom and his holiness, or whether we take it in the stricter sense, for a principle inclining him to maintain and vindicate the rights and dignity of his government, it did direct as well his making a constitution for the punishing of affronts and offences committed against it, as to proceed according to it, so as not to remit such injuries to the offender without most sufficient recompense.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

*That no less a recompense to the Divine Government was sufficient than that made by Emmanuel.*

AND so much being clear, there is less need to insist copiously in showing what was proposed,

(2.) That no recompense could be sufficient for

expiating the wrong done by the violation of God's temple among men, and the laying its foundations anew, besides that which hath been made by the Son of God, "Emmanuel, God with us." And this, by his becoming himself first an original temple, a man, inhabited with all the fullness of God, and then made also a sacrifice to the offended majesty and justice of Heaven, for those great and high purposes, the expiating the indignity of violating God's former temple, and the raising, forming, and beautifying it anew, in conformity to its present pattern and original; and then possessing, inhabiting, and restoring the Divine presence in it. For as it hath been shown already, that this recompense could not be full, and apt to answer these purposes; so it is in itself evident, that whatsoever should be tendered in the name of a recompense, ought to be *full*, and proportionable to the wrong done, and to the favours afterwards to be shown to the transgressors. Here, therefore, let it be observed,

[1.] That it would have been dishonourable to have insisted on less: for it were manifestly more honourable and worthy of God not to have exacted any recompense at all, than to have accepted, in the name of a sacrifice, such as were unproportionable, and beneath the value of what was to be remitted and conferred. What had been lower must have been infinitely lower; let any thing be supposed less than God, and it falls immensely short of him. Such is the distance between created being and uncreated, that the former is as nothing to the latter; and therefore, bring the honour and majesty of the Deity to any thing less than an equal value, and you bring it



to nothing. And this had been quite to lose the design of insisting upon a recompense; it had been to make the majesty of heaven cheap, and depreciate the dignity of the Divine government, instead of rendering it august and great. Therefore the whole constitution of Emmanuel, his undertaking, performances, and acquisitions, appear to have been not only apt, suitable, and sufficient to the intended purposes, but also requisite and necessary thereto.

[2.] What the Divine estimate in this matter was, his own word shows: and for the evincing hereof, let us apply our minds to meditate silently and intently a while on those words of our Lord—"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life:" and let us consider them with that reverence which we cannot but conceive due to words we esteem most sacred and divine; that is that they could not be rashly or lightly spoken: whereupon, let us bethink ourselves, Have those words a meaning? *This*, our awful regard to the venerable greatness of Him that spoke them, cannot suffer us to doubt. And if they mean any thing, it is impossible they should not mean somewhat most profound and great; somewhat that implies a reference to a *divine decorum*, which, as an eternal law, perpetually conducts all the propensions and determinations of God's most perfect will, that could by no means suffer any violation: what was most becoming of God; namely, what might best "become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things;" worthy of the great, all-comprehending, central, original Being, from whence all things sprang, and wherein all terminate. Here is some gradual refection (if we consider what immediately

follows, “ In bringing many sons to glory,” &c.,) of the veiled *arcana* of the Divine Being: if we may, on so fit occasion, allude to the inscription in the Egyptian temple—“ I am all that was and is and shall be, and who is he that shall draw aside my veil?” Here is, in some part, a withdrawing of that sacred veil, by Him to whom by prerogative it belonged, and of whom it is said, “ No man hath seen God at any time, but the only-begotten Son, who is in the Bosom of the Father: he hath declared him.” Here is some disclosure of the mystery of God, of the Father, in whom the Divine nature was primarily, and as in that first fountain; and of Christ the mystery of the Mediator, of whom Christ was the distinguishing name. The agreement, hitherto inconceivable and most mysterious, of the absolute purity and perfection of the Divine nature, with the admirable mercifulness of the constitution of Emmanuel, of God and man united in one, in order to the reconciliation of the holy blessed God, with unholy, miserable man. How was it to be brought about, in a way becoming Him for whom and by whom all things were, so great, so august a Majesty! that He should admit that so despicable and rebellious a race should not only be saved but be made sons! This could never be, though his immense and boundless love most strongly inclined him to it, but by their having one of highest dignity, his own Son, set as a Prince or Prefect over the whole affair of their salvation; nor by him, but upon his own intervening suffering! This was, according to fixed rule, indispensably necessary: that is, by the inviolable maxims of the Divine government. But because, through the inconceivable riches of his

own goodness, this was a thing he was most propense unto, and intent upon: yet because the death of his own Son in their stead could neither be meritorious nor just, without his own free consent, “therefore,” says our Lord, “doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life.”—What conceivable reason can there be of this connexion, (“He therefore loves me, because I lay down my life,”) without the concurrence of these two things to be considered conjunctly? namely, A most intense, vehement love to a perishing world; and an inflexible regard to the eternal, immutable measures of right and wrong, fit and unfit, that had their fixed, everlasting seat in the mind of God.

The first made the *end* necessary, the preventing the total, eternal ruin of a lost world; the second made the Son of God’s *death*, and his *own consent* thereto, the necessary mean to this end. The former, namely, the *end*, was not otherwise necessary than upon supposition; it was not so absolutely necessary, that by any means, right or wrong, fit or unfit, such a ruin (even most deserved) must be prevented. But it was so far necessary, as that if, by any rightful and decorous means, this ruin could be prevented as to many, and a contrary blessed state of perpetual life be attained by them, this must be effected and brought about for them. Not, it is true, for all offenders, but as many as the like eternal, indispensable means and measures of equal and unequal, fit and unfit, capable and incapable, should not exclude.

All this we have in that most admirable text of Scripture, “God so loved the world, that he gave



his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." *So loved!* The matter is signified in such a way as to leave all men amazed; and by their astonishment to supply their most defective conception of so stupendous a love. The *world* is an indefinite term, that contains the special and the afterwards specified object of this love; not a single person, but a whole race of intelligent creatures,—a world inhabited by such, that were not to be left, and finally all swallowed up together in one common ruin; that upon this account he gave his only-begotten Son to *death*, as the event and known design showed. And how inconceivable must his love be to his only-begotten Son! "The brightness of his glory, the express image of his person!" Always his delight! Yet rather than all this world should be lost for ever, He is thus given up! "That whosoever believeth on him should not perish," &c., which expresses the certain, specified, declared object of this love: leaving *them* certainly excluded, who, after sufficient proposal, refuse their homage to the throne of Emmanuel: choose rather their forlorn souls should be for ever forsaken of the Divine presence, than unite with him, and surrender themselves to him, by whom alone they might be refitted, animated again, and inhabited as his living temples. Their exclusion is necessary, by such measures as those, by which such means were necessary to the salvation and blessedness of the others. But who can doubt hereupon, but that this course was indispensably necessary to this end? Especially if (reviewing that first mentioned text) we consider, that our Lord represents

his laying down his life as an inexpressible additional endearment of him to the Father, as if he should say, 'O thou Son of my delights, thou hast now set my love to lost souls at liberty, that hath been ever pregnant with great and godlike designs towards them, and that must otherwise have been under perpetual restraint:' which is,

[3.] Most evidently implied. But it may be said, Could the love of God be under restraint? And I say, No; it could not: therefore to the all-comprehending Mind, where ends and means lie connected together under one permanent eternal view, this course presented itself as peculiarly accommodate to this end; and was therefore eternally determined by easy concert between the Father and the Son, not to remedy but prevent any such restraint. Yet it may be further urged, cannot the absoluteness and omnipotency of a God enable him to satisfy his own propensions, if it were to save ever so many thousand worlds of offending creatures, without taking such a circuit as this? It was once said to a human mortal king, that had about him but a thin shadow of sovereignty, Dost thou now govern Israel, and not make thy will any way take place? Much more might it here be said, Dost thou govern the world—art thou not God? Yes! and may freely say, I can the less, for that I am God, do what is not godlike; that is, can therefore the less break through established, eternal measures, and counteract myself. I must do as becomes Him, for whom and by whom are all things. Others may assume to themselves an imagined unhallowed liberty of pursuing, at the next, their own inclinations; but it is beneath Divine

greatness to do so. Yet, in this case, it may be further said, why did not love to his Son preponderate? Which our Lord himself in great part obviates by what is subjoined—"because I lay down my life;" how? With a power and design to take it again—"I have power to lay it down and I have power to take it again; this is a matter agreed. I am not to lie under a perpetual death; that could neither be grateful to my Father, nor is in itself possible. But as things are stated, I am prepared to endure the cross and despise the shame for the joy set before me; which joy will be everlastingly common to him and me, and to the whole redeemed community according to their measure.' But was all this unnecessary trifling? What serious man's reverence of Deity can let him endure to harbour so profane a thought! Therefore take we now the entire state of this matter, as it lies plainly in view before us in these texts of Scripture: first, here is an inexpressible love of God to undone lost sinners; secondly, here is a plain intimation that this love must have been under a suspension and restraint, if God's own Son had not laid down his life for them; thirdly, it is as plainly signified, that the Son of God's laying down his life for them, was, in Divine estimate, a sufficient expedient to prevent this restraint upon his love to sinners; fourthly, that this expedient was reckoned by the blessed God more eligible than that his love to sinners should be under perpetual, everlasting restraint; fifthly, that it was only reckoned more eligible, as there was a conjunct consideration had of his laying it down, with a power and design of resuming and taking it again; sixthly, that there-



fore, as the eternal God had a most constant, unquestionable love to his only-begotten Son, his love to him hath a peculiar and most complacential exercise, on the account of his concurring with him upon this expedient; choosing rather to endure all the dolours of that "one hour and power of darkness," that was to come upon him, than that a whole world of reasonable creatures, his own offspring, and bearing his own image, should all perish together everlastingly. But who now sees not that this was the determinate judgment of the great God; namely, that his gracious designs towards guilty creatures were not otherwise to be effected than in this way? And yet, for the further clearing of this matter, taking Heb. x, 4, that the blood of the Lord Christ, and of bulls and goats, are put in direct opposition to each other; and hereupon, that it is said of the latter, "It is not possible it should take away sin:" what can that imply less, than that the former was necessary to the taking it away? Let us but appeal to ourselves, what else can it mean? Will we say, though sin could not be taken away by the blood of bulls and goats, it might by some nobler sacrifice of an intermediate value? But is not this manifestly precluded, and barred by the immediateness of the opposition? These two only are in competition, and it is said, not *this*, but *that*. Other sacrifices God would not; then, saith our Lord, "Lo! I come." *These* are rejected, *this* is chosen; he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. When it is said, "not thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil;" if one should say, Yea, but eleven thousand might serve; were not this trifling, not

reasoning? Is it not plain all other were refusable, for the same reason?

I shall now somewhat enlarge upon the two things already intimated under the foregoing head of Emmanuel's sufficiency, &c., as having acquired the two-fold power of *forgiving sin*, and *giving the Spirit*. And shall now show, further, the *necessity* of his engaging in this affair (the restoring of God's temple) with reference to both these things, requisite thereto.

[4.] And to this purpose, let it be considered—What was to be *remitted*, and what was to be *conferred*, by his procurement.

First: What was to be *remitted*. It was not the single trespass of one or a few delinquent persons, but the revolt and rebellion of a vast community; a universal hostility and enmity, continued and propagated through many successive ages, that was now, once for all, to be atoned for. It is hereupon to be considered, How great the offence was that must be remitted, and the way and manner in which the grant was to be made of this remission.

1. How great was the offence to be remitted! A whole race and order of creatures had been in a conspiracy against their rightful Lord, to deface his temple, tear down his image, invade his rights, withhold and incapacitate themselves for his worship, substitute, instead of that, highest contempt, banish his presence, and as much as in them lay raze out his memorial, that he might be no more known, feared, or served upon earth! How horrid a prospect had the Lord from heaven, when, from the throne of his glory there, he beheld the state of things below! "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the

children of men, to see if any did understand, and seek after God; they are all gone back, none that does good, no not one." All were become such mischievous, wicked fools, as to say, with one consent, in their hearts,—“No God!” And though, it is true, this wickedness was not in event to be actually remitted to all, the case was to be so stated, that remission might be universally offered; and that it be left to lie upon men’s own score if it were not accepted; and therefore, that a sacrifice must be offered up, of no less value than if every single transgressor was to have his actual, sealed pardon.

For let it be considered what sort of transgressors are excluded the benefit of remission, on the account of that great Sacrifice that once for all was offered up; and we find it not difficult to apprehend other most important reasons why they are excluded; but no colour of a reason that it should be for want of sufficient value in this Sacrifice.

As for the *angels that fell*, though their case comes not directly under our present consideration, yet occasionally, and as (*a fortiori*) we may argue from it, some thoughts may be usefully employed about it. The Divine pleasure herein is indeed intimated, in the Son of God’s not taking *their* nature but *ours*; and his known measure of showing mercy is, that “he will show mercy because he will show mercy.” Yet, whereas we find that the most sovereign act of grace, the predestinating of some to the adoption of children, is ascribed to the good pleasure, (Eph. i, 5,) the same act is ascribed also to the counsel of his will, ver. 11. And when we see the Apostle in that holy transport, (Rom. xi, 33,) crying



out, in contemplation of distinguishing mercy, “*O the depth!*” he doth not say of the *sovereign power*, but “of the *wisdom and knowledge* of God;” and admires the unsearchableness, not of his arbitrary determinations, but of his judgments and ways, or judicial proceedings towards them that believed, or believed not: implying that he had reasons to himself, though past our finding out, of his different proceedings towards some, and others. And as for the angels that fell, and whom he thought fit not to spare, (2 Pet. ii, 4, 5, Jude, 6,) he threw them into chains of darkness, resolving to deal with them, not upon terms of absolute sovereignty, but of justice, therefore reserving them to the judgment of the great day; not in the mean time affording them a second trial, in order to their recovery, as he hath to us, even of mere mercy; for no justice could oblige him to offer us new terms. Yet their case and ours so differed, that there are reasons obvious to view, and which must lie open to all, in the public, final judgment, why he might judge it fitter to design the objects of mercy among men, than the apostate angels. As,

That we must suppose them (namely, the angels) created, each of them, in *perfect maturity*, unto which we (our first parents excepted) grow up gradually and by slow degrees. *They* had their intellectual ability fit for present exercise when they first existed, and did all then at once coexist; *we* come into being successively, and exist *here* but in a succession.

Whereas they, therefore, must be understood to have been originally under a sort of covenant of works, (as we were,) or were some way or other

made to understand what, by the law of their creation, was their duty towards the Author of their being, and what their expectations might be from him; we have no reason therefore to apprehend that they were treated with, in one common head of their own order, in whom they should stand or fall, as we were; our case not admitting it to be otherwise, because we were not coexistent with him. But we must conceive them to have been, every individual of them, personal covenanters, each one in his own person receiving the signification of his Maker's will; and if there were reason or need of solemn restipulation, each one in his own person as it were plighting his faith, and vowing his allegiance to the celestial crown and throne. They therefore, from a self-contracted malignity, rebelled with open eyes; and though an obligation by a common head were binding, theirs, by their own act and deed, must be more strongly binding, and their revolt more deeply and more heinously criminal.

The posterity of our apostate first parents have but a limited time, in this state of probation, wherein to understand the present altered state of things between them and their offended Lord: within which time, though he foresaw the malignity of very many would never be overcome by his goodness, in the ordinary methods wherein he reckoned it became him to discover and exercise it towards them, yet, according to the course and law of nature he had now settled for this apostate sinful world, their course would soon be run out, and they would not have opportunity long to continue their rebellion, and obstruct his interest and designs on earth. And also

having all things ever present to his all-comprehending view, he foreknew and foredetermined that great numbers should become the captives of his grace, and that the love and blood of an Emmanuel should not be lost and thrown away upon them; but that he should make them “willing in the day of his power” to fall in with gracious intentions, and their Redeemer should see his seed, and the travail of his soul, and be satisfied therein: whereas he beheld the apostate spirits of that higher order fixed in enmity, not vincible by any ordinary methods. Nor was it to be expected he should exert (in this case) his absolute power, and act *to his very uttermost*, as a natural agent doth; or that he should have appointed a Redeemer for their recovery who were irrecoverable: their case at first being (probably) very parallel to theirs among men, who sin “that sin against the Holy Ghost.” And as things lay in divine prospect, their malicious opposition to God’s designs in this world was not bounded within the narrow limits of a short human life, their natures not being subject to a law of mortality, as it is with every sinner among men; but they were beheld as continually filling this world with mischiefs, with wickednesses and miseries, and counterworking all God’s glorious and merciful designs in it; even every one of them, from his first apostacy, as long as the world shall last.

Man sinned at first, being seduced, tempted, and deceived by the devil. The devils, as being their own tempters, sin had in and from them its original and first rise in the creation of God. In all *agency* whether of good or evil, much is wont to be attributed to *this*, Who was *first* in it? In point of



*good*, the blessed God hath no competitor; he is the undoubted first Fountain of all good, and is therefore acknowledged the supreme Good. In point of *evil*, (namely moral,) there is none prior to the devil, who is therefore eminently called *the evil* or *wicked one*. And as the devils were first in sin, so they led us into it, by deceiving us; the malignity of it was therefore the greater on their parts, and proportionably the less on ours. The more knowing are the more deeply guilty, the deceiver than the deceived, and deserve the more stripes. It is true that none can deserve mercy, for then it were justice, and not mercy; but though none can deserve to have mercy shown them, they may deserve not to have it. The more a ruler is above us, and the less he needs us, the less possible it is for us to oblige him, and the more possible to disoblige and offend him, and the more heinous will the offence be: therefore, though none can *claim* mercy, they may *forfeit* it; and will, by the deeper guilt, incur such a forfeiture, by how much the more and clearer the light and knowledge are against which they offend. And this we find to have been a measure with the blessed God, in the exercise of his mercy, even in some of the highest instances hereof that we meet with in holy Scripture; "I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief." Not that this could specify a more deserving object of mercy; for where there can be no desert at all, there can be no *more* or *less*. But it represents the occasion and season of showing mercy more fitly, in the estimate of the Divine wisdom, which conducts the acts of sovereignty; and judges of congruities, as justice doth of right and

wrong. Where indeed, among the objects of mercy, there is an absolute parity, there mere sovereignty determines; as it may be ordinarily, in God's electing among men the objects of his free favour. Where there is no objective reason of eligibility in one more than another, especially if there be such as would rather persuade the contrary way, wisdom hath no proper exercise. But occasions are of greater latitude, and comprehend all considerable circumstances and consequences; and many things lie open to the Divine eye that are hid to ours.

But now, whereas we cannot doubt, that besides such considerations as occur to us, the blessed God saw superabundant ground of not making such provision for the recovery of fallen angels, as of lost men; we can have none, whereupon to imagine the former partake not of the benefit with the latter, for want of value in the sacrifice of Emmanuel. For when the blood of his cross is intimated to extend to all things both in heaven and earth; (Col. i, 20,) to diffuse an influence through the universe; to be the cement of the creation, in what part and for what time it shall continue, subordinately to the Creator's pleasure and purpose; and that by Him, who shed it even as such, all things are said to consist: and that besides his natural right, he hath acquired, by the superabundant value of this sacrifice, (the odours whereof are spread through all worlds,) a universal dominion; and particularly, to be Head of all principalities and powers; to establish the faithful and loyal, to judge and punish the disloyal, over whom he so gloriously triumphed on the cross; to have every knee bow to him, &c., it cannot be, doubtless,

but the value of the same sacrifice had sufficed to obtain a power, as well as to govern and judge all, to establish and reward the good, to punish the bad; to have obtained that, upon terms, pardon and mercy might have reached down into the infernal regions, if they that inhabit them could upon other accounts have been thought a pardonable or tractable sort of delinquents. And if we cannot apprehend this great Sacrifice to want value even to make atonement for devils, we can as little think it should want value to save.

The *impenitent and unbelieving among men under the Gospel*; and that it must therefore also be for some other reason that such perish. As,

If there be any thing of reason in what hath been discoursed concerning the state of the lapsed angels, the continuance of men in wilful impenitency and infidelity, partly *supposes*, partly *makes*, the state of things with them the same.

Partly *supposes* it so. For it implies they have been applied to and treated with personally upon the terms of the second covenant; that is, the covenant of God in Christ, as the apostate angels were upon the first. And if the guilt of the former apostates was so horribly great upon this account, the guilt of the latter must be proportionably so on the same account.

Partly *makes* it the same. For hereby, as the angels were violators first and immediately in their own person of the *first* covenant, so are men of the *second*. For generally they that live under the Gospel are professed covenanters; and if they were not, they could not but have become obliged to have been so by the very proposal and tender thereof unto them;



or as soon as the mind of Him who made them, concerning this matter, was known. They were not obliged by their own consent, but they were obliged to it, and by an incomparably greater and deeper obligation—not by their *own* act and deed, but by *His* who gave them breath. What is their authority over themselves, compared with that of the Supreme Lawgiver? A mere borrowed subordinate thing, without and apart from him, without whom their being itself were mere nothing! An argument *ad hominem* is convictive in disputation between one man and another; but how much more overpowering means of conviction will there be in the judgment of the great day! And the parity of cases between the angels that fell and insolent sinners under the Gospel, is intimated as monitory to the latter, in those texts of Scripture that speak of God's most just and terrible severity to the former, namely, the sin of both was apostacy, according to the different covenants or laws under which they stood. For as the one sort were apostates from God, so the others were from Christ, "denying the Lord that bought them." 2 Pet. ii, 1. And again, "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." Jude, 4. Whereupon this example of God's vengeance upon the angels that fell is subjoined in both places. Besides, what was *common* to them with the apostate angels, there were some things *peculiar* to these wilful refusers of the grace of the Gospel, and violators of the Gospel covenant, As,

That the guilt of wilful sinners under the Gospel admits of *this* aggravation above that of the rebelling

angels, that they offend against the grace of the remedy never offered to the other ; treading under foot the Son of God, profaning the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, as an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace. Heb. x, 29. And,

That the *offer itself* made to them carried in it a manifest signification of their claimable right to the benefits of the Gospel covenant, on supposition of their compliance with the terms of it, unto which the fallen angels could have no pretence, barred only by their non-acceptance or refusal, which appears in the general tenor of the Gospel covenant itself : “ Ho, every one that thirsts.”—“ Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely.”—“ God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish. And it is here to be noted, that a secret intention gives not a claimable right, but some overt act or deed ; and it must be claimable, before it ought to be claimed or accepted. This is the case then with the wilfully impenitent and rebellious under the Gospel, that it may be truly said to them, “ You might have had pardon and eternal life, if you had not rejected the kindest offers.” It is not, therefore, want of value in this sacrifice, but their rejection, whence it is unavailing to them. As for them that could never have the Gospel, or infants incapable of receiving it, we must consider the holy Scriptures were written for those that could use them, not for those that could not ; therefore to have inserted into them an account of God’s methods of dispensation towards such had only served to gratify

the curious and unconcerned, not to instruct or benefit such as were concerned. And it well became hereupon the accurate wisdom of God, not herein to indulge the vanity and folly of man.

2. Now let it hereupon be considered, in what way was this to be done: not otherwise than by enacting and publishing a *universal law*, that whosoever should comply with such and such terms, expressed in that law, (as, for instance, repentance towards God, and faith in Jesus Christ,) should be actually and finally pardoned and saved. And this being now the plain state of the case, let any sober, unprejudiced mind make a judgment of it, what this matter would come to if there had not been a compensation made, as a foundation to this law, and the publication of it. They that exalt one divine perfection to the diminution of several others; that, for instance, so plead for the absoluteness and sovereignty of God's mercy, as not to adjust therewith the determinations of his wisdom, purity, righteousness, forget that they hereby make any satisfaction by a Redeemer unnecessary, (and by consequence make Christ, whom they cannot deny to have suffered and died, being innocent, to have died in vain,) nor do allow in their own thoughts its just weight to this state of the case,—that the method in which God was to exercise his pardoning mercy, was by publishing an edict for that purpose, that was to extend all the world over, and through all the successions of time. They know this is the course the wisdom of God hath pitched upon, and yet, taking the case as it is, would have this large, universal tenor of the Gospel to proceed upon no foregoing compensation.



The great God requires it should be proclaimed to all the world, “Ho, every one that thirsts, come to the waters.”—“Whosoever believes shall not perish, but have life everlasting.”—“If the wicked turn from all the sins he hath committed, he shall not die; all his transgressions shall not be mentioned.”—“Repent, so your iniquities shall not be your ruin.”—“Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest,”—“Go, preach the Gospel to every creature; whosoever believes shall be saved.” This is the known tenor of the Gospel, directed, without limitation, to all the ends of the earth—“Look to me, and be saved; all sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to men.” That Gospel which determines that whosoever believes shall be saved, is directed to be preached to all nations. He did first, by his angels from heaven, indefinitely proclaim, “Peace on earth, and good-will towards men;” and pursuant hereto was the commission given by our ascending Lord to his apostles and ministers that should succeed to the end of the world. Now, suppose that without reference to, or mention any where made of this compensation to the justice of God, there must be an offer made of such mercy, not to present delinquents only, but to all, in all future times and ages!

With what methods of government would such a course as this agree? I the rather insist upon this, both as apprehending it to have its own great weight, and that perhaps it hath escaped the consideration of the most in treating of this important subject; yet, what is more obvious? It is one thing for a prince, by a private act of grace, to pardon a parti-

cular person that hath offended him, without insisting upon any recompense; another thing to do it to a multitude, not only that had now transgressed, but that should do so in any future time. Lighter minds may perhaps, at first sight, reckon this would only so much the more magnify the mercy of God above that of man, "whose ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts." And so indeed doth the way he hath taken for the pardoning of sin infinitely exceed all human thought. But we must take heed of being so inconsiderately officious, as to prescribe him ways of exalting one attribute to the depressing of another, and so to set him above men in one respect, as to throw him in another below himself, yea, and below men too; that is, not more to set him above them in point of mercy, than beneath them in point of governing, wisdom, and righteousness. And if any would be so insolent to prescribe to him, they might have thought the inconvenience of such a universal edict might have been avoided, by his sending an angel, or affording some particular revelation to every man he would have turn to him and repent. But were it dutiful so to correct his way of dispensation? And consider how this way he hath chosen would square with the ordinary measures of government, without the foundation laid which we are asserting. That prince would certainly never be so much magnified for his clemency and mercy, as he would be despised by all the world for most remarkable defects of government, that should not only pardon whosoever of his subjects had offended him, upon their being sorry for it, but go about to provide a law that should obtain

in his dominions, through all after time, that whosoever should offend against the government, with whatsoever insolency, malignity, and frequency, if they repented, they should never be punished, but be taken forthwith into highest favour. Admit that it had been congruous to the wisdom and righteousness of God, as well as his goodness, to have pardoned a particular sinner upon repentance, without satisfaction; yet nothing could have been more apparently unbecoming him, than to settle a universal law, for all future time, to that purpose; that let as many as would, in any age, to the world's end, affront him ever so highly, invade his rights, trample his authority, tear the constitution of his government, they should, upon their repentance, be forgiven, and not only not be punished, but be most highly advanced and dignified.

And though he hath, upon the recompense made him by his Son for all this injury, declared he will do all this, they accepting their Redeemer and Saviour for their Ruler and Lord, and returning to their state of subjection and duty to himself in him; yet it were enough to make the world tremble and fall astonished at his footstool, to have peace and reconciliation offered them only upon such terms; and to behold God's own Son made a sacrifice to his justice, and a public spectacle to angels and men, for the expiation of the wrong done; and enough to make all men despair of ever finding such another sacrifice, if they should reject the terms upon which only the value and meritoriousness of this can be available for them. They can never, after this, have pretence to think it a light matter to offend God, or



to think that he looks with indifferency upon sin, or counts it a small matter. And suppose it possible a single delinquent might have been pardoned, without such atonement made for his offence, the design of God's unbounded mercy not being so narrow, but so vastly comprehensive as to require the settling of a stated course for the reducing and saving of lost souls, in all times and ages; since a Redeemer of so high dignity was to be constituted for this purpose: it had been, an inexpressible injury to him, a deduction from the kindness of his undertaking and the authority of his office, that any thing of mercy should be shown in this kind, but in him and by him alone.

But that it may be further understood how requisite it was such atonement should be made, such a sacrifice offered for the sins of men, in order to God's settling his temple and presence with them, we were to consider not only what was to be remitted, which we have done, but also what was to be communicated, namely, his blessed Spirit, in pursuance of the same gracious purpose.

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## CHAPTER IX.

*The Communication of the Holy Spirit necessary to the Formation of the Living Temple. The Spirit given only through Christ.*

WHEREAS there could be no restoration of this temple of God with men without the concurrence of

these two things—the remission of sin, and the emission of the Holy Spirit; and that it was undertaken to show that these were so great things as that the wisdom of God judged it not meet to vouchsafe them in another way than by constituting Emmanuel invested with a full power, by his own acquisition, in an exceptionable, legal way, to dispense and effect both of them; wherefore, as we have seen, this constitution was abundantly sufficient, so it now also must appear necessary for this purpose. Having endeavoured to evince this necessity concerning the former of these, *remission of sin*, upon consideration of the vast amplitude and the peculiar way of this remission: we are now,

Secondly, To show it concerning the latter; namely, the emission, or communication of the Holy Spirit.

The rich sufficiency of Emmanuel, so constituted, as to be furnished with this power of giving the Spirit, hath already been seen, and that in a two-fold respect; namely, both in respect of the end of its communication, that the indisposed, unwilling heart of man might be prepared and made willing again to receive the divine presence; and in respect of the way wherein it was to be communicated; namely, in a way suitable to man's intelligent nature, by representation of the glorious object by which his soul was to be impressed. Emmanuel himself, represented as the *original, exemplary temple*; and also represented as *made a sacrifice*, whereby the two purposes are answered. For which it was requisite this constitution of Emmanuel should be, and should be declared and made known to us; that the blessed

God might, upon terms not injurious to himself, give his own consent; and might, in a way not unsuitable to us, gain ours. Both which he is graciously pleased to assume to himself, for his part, in his transactions with us about this matter; leaving it for our part, being so assisted, to consider what is represented to us: and thereupon, actually to give our own consent.

1. Wherefore, we are not to look upon the gospel of the Son of God as a useless or unnecessary thing. It is the ministration of spirit and life, and the power of God to salvation to every one that believes; an apt instrument of such impressions upon the spirits of men as are necessary to their being formed into living temples—the sword of the Spirit. Not that any good work is wrought by the inanimate gospel—the letter kills, but it is the Spirit that gives life. An instrument comes under the general notion of means, which signify somewhat middle between the efficient and the effect. And suppose an agent able effectually to use them; a sword is a fit instrument for its proper use, supposing a hand able to wield it.

The communication, therefore, of the Spirit, is what we are principally now to consider. And as the constitution of Emmanuel was sufficient, in its own kind, and for its own proper purpose, in this restoration; so we are to show the necessity of it, for this same purpose.

2. There ought to be a concurrence of these two, in the Cause, the Restorer, of this temple; namely, a fullness of righteousness, to be so imparted as that it may be a ground upon which sin may be forgiven; and a fullness of Spirit, from whence vital influence may be communicated and transfused.



Inasmuch as it is most evident, there cannot but be a connexion of what is correspondent thereto in the effect; namely, the temple itself restored, it must be full of life. For can it be thought that the righteousness of the Son of God should ever be the clothing of a carcass? Without union to Christ, no man can have either: neither his righteousness nor his indwelling Spirit. Nor can they be separable, with reference to the designed end. It is an un-supposable thing that one should be God's temple, enlivened and animated by his own Spirit, and yet be under remaining guilt, and liable every moment to his consuming wrath; or that he could be any whit the better to have all his former guilt taken off, and be still "dead in trespasses and sins!" Wherefore this latter is of equal necessity: hither therefore we have reserved the larger discourse we intended of the gift or communication of the Spirit, as the most proper place for it. And by way of preparation hereto, it is necessary to consider,

3. How, or in what sense, the Spirit is said to be given at all, or communicated; or to say somewhat of the true import of the phrase, *giving the Spirit*. It is evident, that whereas *giving* imports some sort of communication, there is yet a sense wherein that blessed Spirit is, to any creature, simply incommunicable. There is a mutual *in-being* of the sacred persons in the Godhead, which is most peculiar to themselves, not communicable to creatures with them; and which is natural and necessary, not gratuitous, and whereto, therefore, the notion of *gift* no way agrees. We cannot yet be ignorant, that because the Holy Spirit is sometimes called the *Spirit*

of God, sometimes the *Spirit of Christ*, some bold assuming enthusiasts, upon pretence of being possessed of this Spirit, have taken the liberty of uttering “great swelling words of vanity,” and to talk of being goddèd with God, and christed with Christ. Yet, because the expressions of giving the Spirit, of receiving, of having the Spirit, of our being in the Spirit, and of his being and dwelling, or abiding in us, are phrases of known and frequent use in Scripture—whether in relation to extraordinary purposes and operations, peculiar to some, or to ordinary, common to all that are sincere in the Christian church—such expressions are therefore by no means to be rejected or disused; but cautiously used, and understood in a sound and sober sense. We find no difficulty in apprehending how God is said to give any thing diverse or distinct from himself; as houses, lands, riches, &c., when in the mean time we will confess it not so easy to conceive of his giving what is within the verge of Deity, or that is of and belonging to himself. Some have thought, that by the Spirit given, we are to understand the operations and effects of the Spirit, *extraordinary*, as of prophecy, working miracles, &c., and *ordinary*, the graces, habits, acts, and influences of the Spirit. Others, finding it so expressly said of the Spirit himself, spoken of as a person, that he shall be given, he shall abide with, and shall or doth dwell with or in you, have thought it too diminishing, and beneath the sense of those places to understand them of any thing less than the very person of the Spirit. And some, reckoning the particle *in* to import union, have therefore incogitantly spoken of a personal union between

the Holy Spirit and believers. Others, more cautiously, of his indwelling, personal presence in them; as a greater thing, and more answerable to the letter of such texts, than their only having in them his graces or gracious influences. If any one may adventure to give a censure and judgment upon all this, and to show,

4. What personal union signifies, I conceive that if any will make use of metaphysical terms, they should take them in the sense wherein metaphysicians use them; which they do not, who speak of a *personal union* between Christ, or the Spirit of Christ, and believers. For by personal union is never wont to be meant a union of one person with another, but a union of the singular nature with this peculiar manner of subsistence, whereby is constituted one person; that is, that by personal union is meant, not the subjects of union, as if it only signified that several persons remaining distinct, were yet some way or other united with one another; which, so taken, were a very lax expression, and which, according to the various capacities persons may admit of, would be of vast extent, and may reach to domestical, political, and I know not how many more unions; which cannot but be much beneath what such men must be understood to intend; but that expression, *personal union*, means the result of union, whereby the mentioned two become one person. And, therefore, they that speak in this stricter and more proper sense of personal union of the Spirit and believers, do most unwarily assert a nearer union between the Spirit and believers than that of the sacred persons in the Godhead with each other. For they who acknow-



ledge them one in Godhead, do yet as commonly deny them to be one person, and assert them to be ever three distinct persons; and this must be as much above what such men will avow and stand by. Therefore that expression can, in this case, admit no tolerable sense at all, distinctly expressive of any thing that can be truly meant by it. But,

5. How do personal presence, vital union, and communicated influences, concern the subject? for,

(1.) *That, of a personal indwelling presence, can by no means be denied.* The plain import of many texts of Scripture is so full to this purpose, that to take them otherwise, exclusively of this, is not to *interpret* Scripture, but *deny it*.

(2.) Yet this expression of a *personal indwelling presence*, taken alone, doth not signify any peculiar distinguishing privilege of believers from others; but what is common to all men and creatures. For can we acknowledge God to be omnipresent, and deny it of any person of the Godhead? Therefore, the Spirit's personal presence alone doth not distinguish believers from others, even though we suppose that presence to be ever so intimate; God is all and in all, more inward or intimate to us than we are to ourselves; an assertion carrying its own evidence so fully in itself, as easily to be transferred from the Pagan academy to the Christian church, so as generally to obtain in it.

(3.) That therefore such as speak of the Spirit's being present, by his gracious influences, operations, and effects, suppose his personal presence, from which they can no more be severed than the beams from the body of the sun. The way of divine operation

being also by an immediateness of both *power and person*, as it is commonly, and fitly enough, wont to be spoken.

If any therefore should speak of the Spirit's personal presence, as secluding gracious effects wrought thereby, they do not herein say a greater thing than the others, but much less. For though there cannot be any gracious effects without the present person of the Spirit, yet we all know he may be personally present where he produces no such effects; it is therefore his being so present as to be the productive cause of such blessed effects, that is any one's peculiar advantage. It is very possible to have the personal presence of some great and munificent personage, and be nothing the better for it, if his favour be shut up towards me. It is only his communicative presence that I can be the better for, which depends upon free good-will.

(4.) It is therefore only the free, gracious presence of the Spirit, that can be the matter of gift and of promise; not that which is necessary, or impossible not to be, which is peculiar and distinguishing. Mere personal presence, as the Divine essence itself, is every where, by necessity of nature, not by vouchsafement of grace; and therefore no way comports with the notion of giving, or of promise.

(5.) Therefore, giving the Spirit imports, in the full sense of it, two things:—

[1.] Somewhat real, when he vouchsafes to be in us, as the spring and fountain of gracious communications, influences, and effects, which are most distinct from himself. For the cause is uncreated: the effect is the new creature, with whatsoever was

requisite to produce, sustain, improve, and perfect it; though so like its cause, in nature, as to bear its name: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." And because he is said to be in Christians, who are truly such, and they in him—which are words very expressive of union—that union is most properly vital, as whereof holy life is the immediate result: "I live, yet not I, but Christ" (that is, by his Spirit) "liveth in me." Nor, otherwise, could such be living temples, animated from Emmanuel.

[2.] Somewhat relative, the collation of a right to such a presence, for such purposes; which hath no difficulty. We easily conceive how the meanest persons may, by vouchsafement, have relation to, and interest in, the greatest; so God gives himself, his Son, his Spirit, to them that covenant with him, as we also take the Father, Son, and Spirit, to be our God; as the baptismal form signifies. And when we so covenant, then hath this *giving* its full and complete sense. And now, having thus far seen in what sense the blessed Spirit of God may be said to be given or communicated, we come next briefly to show,

6. In what respect we are here to affirm a *necessity*, in reference to this communication. It may admit a twofold reference; backward, to the constitution of Emmanuel, on which it depends;—forward, to the restoration of God's temple, which depends on it. There was a consequent, moral necessity of this communication; upon what the Emmanuel was, did, suffered, and acquired. There was an antecedent, natural necessity of it, in order to what was to be effected and done by it. In the former



respect, it was necessary in point of *right*, as it stood related to its meriting cause. In the latter respect, it was necessary *in fact*, as it stood related to its proper designed effect, which could only be brought about by it. In short, the communication of the Spirit was necessary to the restoring of this temple. The constitution of Emmanuel was necessary to the communication of the Spirit.

This *former necessity* hath, in great part, been evinced already, in representing the ruinous state of God's temple among men, when Emmanuel undertook the reparation of it; and in treating of his abundant rich *sufficiency* for this undertaking.

For as we have shown, that the immense fullness of both righteousness and Spirit, treasured up in Emmanuel, could not but be abundantly sufficient for the purpose of restoring God's temple; and have also shown, that his fullness of righteousness was in order to the remission of sin, as well necessary as sufficient to the same purpose; so it remains further to be shown, that his fullness of Spirit, as it was sufficient, so is the emission or immission of it also necessary, for that part it was to have in this restoration. And that the whole course of Divine dispensation in restoring this temple imports a steady comportment with this necessity in both the mentioned kinds of it. Therefore, the Emmanuel being the procurer of this restoration, as this may fitly be styled the temple of Christ, or of God in him; so the Spirit, being the immediate actor herein, is it also styled the temple of the Holy Ghost, as we find in many texts of Scripture, Eph. ii, 20, 21; 1 Cor. iii, 16, and vi, 19; 2 Cor. vi, 16; 1 Peter ii, 4, 5; which the reader

may consult at leisure. And they all show how important and necessary a part the blessed Spirit hath in this merciful and glorious work. As withall, it being considered what relation the Spirit bears to Christ, as he is Emmanuel and Mediator between God and man, it evidently shows the necessity of his being constituted and made such, in order to the Spirit's part herein.

God's own judgment is the surest measure to direct ours of what was necessary in this case. And so far as the ground of his judgment is, by himself, made visible to us, we are neither to put out our own eyes, nor turn them away from beholding it. We are to reckon it always safe and modest to follow him by an obsequious, ductile judgment of things apparent, and which he offers to our view, or appeals to us about them. To go before him by a preventive judgment of the secret things that belong to him, or pretend to give reasons, or an account of his matters, where he gives none himself, argues rashness, arrogance, and self-confidence, whereof we can give no account. But our judgment may be truly said to follow his, when he having in his word declared his choice of such a course, which he steadily pursues in his consequent dispensations; we thereupon conclude that course to be most fit, and that what he judged most fit, was to him necessary. Therefore may we with just confidence undertake to show,

That his declared, chosen, constant course of giving the Spirit, for restoring his temple with men, is to do it in and by Christ, or Emmanuel, the constituted Mediator between God and man. And that it was apparently reasonable and becoming of himself so to do.

Whereby the necessity will appear, both of his giving the Spirit, for the restoring of his temple, and of his settling the constitution of Emmanuel, or such a Mediator, in order to the giving his Spirit.

Only, before we proceed more distinctly to discourse these things, it seems requisite to consider and discuss a difficulty, which may give great amusement to the minds of many; namely,

7. That since, by the drift and tendency of this discourse, it would appear, that the Son of God, Emmanuel, God with us, hath, by his own dear purchase, a fullness of Spirit in him for this blessed work; and now hath it in his power to raise temples every where at his pleasure—that yet so great a part of the world is still desolate, full of idols' temples; yea, the visible temple of God full of idols, destitute of the divine Spirit, under the poisonous influence of the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the hearts of the children of disobedience, Eph. ii, 2, and *by an efficacious energy*, as the word there used emphatically signifies. For what, hath that accursed spirit more power to destroy, than the Son of God manifested to dissolve and destroy the works of the devil, and his blessed Spirit have to save?

Some considerations, tending to disamuse men's minds about this matter, may make way for our clearer and less interrupted progress in the following discourse. Therefore consider,

(1.) That the raising up of temples to God in the souls of men, with the dispossessing of that wicked one, must by no means be understood to be the work of mere power; as if no other excellency of the divine



Being were concerned in it. Nor is it fit to say, that God can do every thing that almighty power can do. Almighty power gives us not an adequate notion of God. He is every other excellency as well as power; and can do nothing but what agrees with every other perfection of his nature, wisdom, justice, holiness, truth, &c., as well as his power.

(2.) The Son of God, Emmanuel, having obtained an infinite fullness of power to reside in himself, cannot be expected to exert it to the utmost, as natural, unintelligent agents do. But so far as is suitable to the proper ends of his undertaking, and the office which he bears.

(3.) It ought to be deeply considered, as a truth both of clearest evidence and great importance, that the principal end of our Lord's undertaking and office, was not the salvation of men, but the glory of God. This is that upon which his design did ultimately terminate. The other he could only intend secondarily, and as a mean to this; otherwise he would make the creature his chief end, and place upon it a most appropriate divine prerogative, to be the last, as he is the first, to all things: which he said of the great God, in reference to this very case, the saving of some and rejecting of others. In contemplation whereof, the Apostle, crying out, "O the depth!" asserts God's absolute liberty, as debtor to no man; and subjoins the true reason hereof, that "of him, and by him, and to him, are all things, that to him might be glory," &c. This is the avowed design of our Lord Christ's office, in both his lowest humiliation and highest exaltation. The desire of being saved from the (approaching) hour and power

of darkness vanishes, and gives place to this—“Father, glorify thy name,” John, xii, 27, 28. When, for his obedience to death, that of the cross, he is highly exalted—all are to confess him Lord, to the praise and glory of God. He, who is the most competent and most rightful Judge, determines when it will be more for the glory of God, to dispossess the strong man armed, being himself the stronger, and erect that house into a temple: and when it will most serve this his great end, to leave the strong man armed still in his possession, and finally to doom the possessor and the possessed to take their lot together. In the *former* case, there are vessels unto honour, framed by his own hand, to the praise of the glory of grace. In the *latter*, vessels unto dishonour, to glorify his power, by making known his wrath and just resentments. For that honourable purpose none are of themselves fit; but he makes them meet for that glorious state, before he makes them partakers of it: but none serve the dishonourable use, but who are, of themselves, vessels of wrath fitted for destruction. Our Lord was faithful as a Son; and was therefore content to die upon a cross, that he might, in a way against which the strictest justice should not reclaim, obtain to himself a power of giving an apostate world a time of trial; and as men should acquit themselves, by complying or not complying with his methods, glorify the Father, whose glory he sought, as being sent by him, and vindicate the rights of the Divine government, both in “them that are saved, and in them that perish.”

(4.) But it may gain us further advantage, to

consider the great God doth not pursue ends, as we are wont to do, who commonly apprehend ourselves to stand in need of the things we pursue as our ends. But he acts agreeably to his self-sufficient fullness, who dwells not in temples made with hands, nor in any human temple, “as if he needed any thing, seeing he gives to all life and breath and all things;” and expects hereupon that men should seek after him:—as nothing is more fit, than that indigency and necessity should crave and supplicate to rich and abounding fullness. Princes glory in their acquisitions, and the increased multitude of their subjects, from whom they have an increase of power, and the ampler revenues. They glory in receiving; He in giving, in making his diffusive goodness flow among his creatures. Nor hath he any cause to be anxious about the event, or how his communications are received; beholding, always, with infinitely higher complacency, the perfect rectitude of his own dispensations, than their felicity, though he take a secondary pleasure in that too, when it is the result of the former. He glories, as he requires us to do, (Jer. ix, 24,) that he exerciseth loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, because in those he delighteth.

(5.) Though the goodness and loving-kindness of God be immense, and without limit, yet the exercise of it is within certain limits, which annexed judgment, or the most exquisite wisdom, prescribes to it. He waits to be gracious—and because he is the God of judgment, they are blessed that wait for him, Isa. xxx, 18. There is a critical season and nick of time, which men are concerned to wait for;



and because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore is the misery of man great: for man also knows not his time. The most perfect wisdom hath drawn out a certain verge, within which the most special goodness confines, ordinarily, its communications; otherwise, what means that—"if thou continue in his goodness," Rom. xi, 22, with that of Jude, 21, "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life"? While we converse with the ever-blessed One, within the region of his own love and goodness, imbibing, and taking in his free and gracious communications, and still craving and expecting more, we keep within the sacred vital circle and enclosure; without which is darkness and the shadow of death. We breathe in the element of life, by grateful aspirations and respirations, that cannot be unpleasant to ourselves, but must be infinitely more pleasant to him, who reckons it a more blessed thing to give than to receive. We are always to remember, that our state is that of expectants; that we keep ourselves in the love of God, looking, waiting, always onward, untill we attain eternal life. Our waiting hath the annexed promise of blessedness, as above, Isa. xxx, 18, and Prov. viii, 34, and is most becomingly required, as a just homage to sovereign goodness.

(6.) That admirable goodness of God, which shows itself in raising up temples in this vile world by the Spirit of Emmanuel, claims our subordinate co-operation as under-builders in this structure: we are to work, because he works, of his good pleasure. Which signifies both his liberty and delight in

working. It is said, 1 Cor. iii, 9, "Ye are God's building;" yet it is also said, ver. 14, "If any man's work abide which he hath built," &c.

One of great note in the ancient Christian church, (Chrysostom) discoursing of this passage, says, "*The building is not the artist's, or workman's, but the Lord's, that owns it; and who is to be,*" as a little after he speaks, "*the inhabitant of it.*" And inasmuch as we are to be living, intelligent temples, we are also to be ourselves labourers and workmen (as well as they who are to be so by special office) in this building. But if our work be pulling down, stifling convictions, suppressing desires, fear, &c., do we provoke the Lord to jealousy, by keeping up the service of the idol's temple, and profaning his own? Or have we forgot who hath said, "Vengeance is mine," even for treading under foot his Son Emmanuel, and despiting his Spirit of grace? The high pleasure the blessed God takes in his own gracious communications gratefully received, and his just resentment and displeasure for the contemptuous refusal of them, may be understood some way to measure one another. Both may be conjectured from this text of Scripture, after such sort, as the great things of God can be conceived of, by such mean mortals. The Spirit of grace, of all kindness, love, goodness, benignity, sweetness! O the ineffable delight that blessed Spirit must take in its own effusions, tending to the recovery, the healing, and saving of a lost soul, when there is an agreeable comportment therewith! But the despiting of such a Spirit! Who can conceive or apprehend, deeply enough, the horror of this crime! the thwarting the

design of so compassionate goodness! or of severity or soreness of the punishment it shall be thought worthy of!

The whole work of faith, that is, that entire work necessary to be wrought upon the soul of a man in order to his future felicity, and that by God's own power, is called the fulfilling or satisfying the good pleasure of his goodness, 2 Thess. i, 11. O the plenitude of satisfaction which our blessed Lord takes in the fulfilling the good pleasure of his goodness, when the methods are complied with, according whereto he puts forth his power for effecting such a work! But if we can apprehend what it is to cross a man of power in his pleasures: what is it to withstand the great God in his pleasures! even the pleasures of his goodness! his most connatural, delightful pleasures! Some estimate we can make, by supposing a wealthy, potent, wise, and good man, intent upon reclaiming a poor, wretched, undone, perverse neighbour; if his supplies and counsels be gratefully received, how pleasant is it to his benefactor! if often repeated, they are scornfully rejected, how vexing is the disappointment!

(7.) We must know, there are vincible operations of that Spirit, leading on to those that are victorious being complied with; otherwise, to the most terrible vengeance. When it was charged upon the Jews, Acts, vii, 51, that they did always resist the Holy Ghost, as their fathers did—it is implied, he was always striving, though more rarely, to victory. But when it is said, Prov. i, 23, "Turn at my reproof," could any assay to turn without some influence of the Spirit? But that complied with, tends to pour-



ing forth a copious effusion, not to be withstood. The less gentler aids and insinuations of grace lead to what shall overcome.

(8.) Without such an overpowering effusion, man's impotency will be acknowledged, by those that understand either the Scriptures or themselves. But how perverse is the inference, that therefore they are to sit still! No; therefore to pray, cry, strive, wait, more than they that wait for the morning, untill he be gracious, and show mercy.

(9.) Therefore, for men to be destitute of the Spirit is criminal: and as much so, not to be filled with the Spirit, as to be drunk with wine. The same authority that forbids the one enjoins the other, Eph. v, 18.

(10.) But though it be God's ordinary method, to proceed gradually in raising temples to himself in this world, he never so binds his own hands as not to do extraordinary acts of grace and favour when he thinks fit; and without any danger of forcing men's wills, or offering violence to human nature; than which imagination nothing is more absurd; both because,

[1.] The forcing of a man's will implies a contradiction in the terms; for we have no other notion of force than the making one do a thing against his will. But it is impossible a man should will or be willing against his will. He that hath made a man's soul and all its powers well enough knows how to govern him without violence, and by (though ever so sudden) an immission of his light and grace, effectually to change a man's will without forcing it. And also because,

[2.] No man that hath the present use of his own faculties will think they can be injured by Divine light and grace; or that they hurt the nature of man, which they manifestly tend to restore, improve, and perfect. Yet no man is to expect, that because the blessed God vouchsafes to make some rarer instances of dealing by way of sudden surprise with the spirits of men, that this should be his ordinary method; but, more usually, to awaken them into some consideration of that forlorn state, while they are destitute of the Divine presence, and their souls the haunts and residence of devils, instead of temples of the Holy Ghost. And to make them know, that he counts the gift of his Son and Spirit too great things to be despised, or not earnestly sought, after he hath given hope of their being attained; or that the neglect thereof should not have a very terrible vindication: letting men feel that the despising the riches of his goodness, which gently leads to repentance, is nothing else but “treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath,” and the revelation of his righteous judgment. Inasmuch as he owes it to himself, to let them know that the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity needs not seek to them for a house. And as to what, in ordinary course, he judges necessary, (lest men should in all this be thought justly querulous) he appeals to themselves, Isa. v, 4. “What could I have done more? Are not my ways equal?” Ezek. xviii.

8. Whereupon, we now proceed to show the two things before intimated:

That the Holy Spirit is not otherwise given than in or by Emmanuel, or for Christ's sake; and, How

necessary, or how highly reasonable it was in itself, and may appear to us, that so mighty a gift, and of this peculiar nature and kind, should not be vouchsafed to men, upon other terms, or in any other way, than this.

(1.) For the former of these: That the Spirit of God is actually given, upon this account only, his own word sufficiently assures us. And who can so truly inform us, upon what considerations he doth this or that as he himself? Let us then, with equal, unbiassed minds, consider the tenor and import of what we find spoken in the holy Scripture about this matter, which I conceive may be truly summed up thus; namely,

[1.] That the Holy Spirit is given to this purpose of restoring the temple of God with men, with the worship and fruitions thereof, under a twofold notion,—of a Builder, and an Inhabitant.

[2.] That He is given under both notions, or for both these purposes, for Christ's sake, and in consideration of his death and sufferings; though they have not influence to the obtaining of this gift, for both these purposes, in the same way, but with some difference, to be afterwards explained in what follows.

[3.] That it was not the immediate effect of his suffering, that this blessed Spirit should be forthwith given to this or that particular person; but that all the fullness of his grace be given into Christ's power, and the right of dispensing it annexed to his office, as he is the Redeemer of sinners, and Mediator between God and them, for the accomplishing the end of his office, the ceasing of controversies, enmities, and disaffections on our part, godward.



[4.] That hereupon, its actual communication for both the mentioned purposes, is immediately from Christ, or by and through him.

[5.] That it is given by Christ, under the former notion, or for the former purpose of rebuilding God's temple, as a sovereign or an absolute plenipotentiary in the affairs of lost souls, in a more arbitrary way, so as not to be claimable upon any foregoing right.

[6.] That he gives it under the latter notion, and in order to a continued abode and inhabitation, as the steward of the household of God, proceeding herein by fixed rule; published in the Gospel, according to which the subjects of this following communication, being qualified for it by the former, may, with certainty, expect it upon the prescribed terms, and claim it as a right; he having, by the merit of his blood, obtained that they might do so.

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## CHAPTER X.

*The Holy Spirit is given both as a Builder and as an Inhabitant of this Temple.*

I. Now let us see, as to each of these, whether this be not the plain doctrine of the Scriptures in this matter.

First, For the first of these, it hath been sufficiently shown already, and the common experience of all the world shows, that untill this blessed Spirit be given, the temple of God is every where all in ruin :

that therefore he cannot dwell untill he build, and that he builds that he may dwell, are things, here-upon, plain in themselves, and are plainly enough spoken in Scripture. Let us therefore,

1. Consider the Scripture testimony concerning both these. When the Apostle had told the Christians of Corinth, "Ye are God's building;" he shortly after adds, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" This temple, being a living thing, (as 1 Pet. ii, 5, represents it,) the very building and formation of it is, in the more peculiar sense, generating; and because it is to be again raised up out of a former ruinous state, wherein it lay dead and buried in its own ruins, this new production is regeneration. And do we need to be put in mind whose work that is? that "it is the Spirit that quickeneth?" (John, vi, 63,) or of what is so industriously inculcated by our Lord, (chap. iii, ver. 3, 5, 6, &c.,) and testified under the seal of his fourfold Amen, that this new birth must be by the Spirit? And we have both notions again conjoined, Eph. ii. For having been told, (ver. 18,) that both Jews and Gentiles have, by one Spirit, access to the Father, so as to be no longer strangers and at a distance, but made nigh to God; (ver. 19, compared with verse 13,) it is said, (verse 20,) We "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone;" and again added, (verse 21,) "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth (as a living thing) unto an holy temple in the Lord." After all which, the end and use of this building (implied in the name of a temple) are more expressly

subjoined, (ver. 22,) “In whom also ye are builded together an habitation of God, through the Spirit.” It is therefore sufficiently evident, that the Spirit is given under these distinct notions, and for these several purposes, the one subordinated to the other, namely, both as a builder and a dweller.

2. That the Spirit is given for Christ’s sake, whether for the one purpose or the other, is as expressly signified as any thing in the whole Gospel. For what means it that he is said to be given *in his name*, John, xiv, 26, and xv, 26, and that the work he does, being given, is said to be done in his name? “Ye are sanctified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the Spirit of our God.”

Yea, and that it is given in consideration of his sufferings and death, is not less plainly spoken; for not only are the immediate and most peculiar operations of this Spirit ascribed to his death, “He himself bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness;” but the imparting of the Spirit itself is represented as the design and end of those sufferings: “He was made a curse for us, for cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit,” &c.

3. It was the same way and on the same terms, upon the largeness and certainty of the Divine prospect and foresight touching Christ’s future sufferings, that this was the blessing of Abraham and his posterity long before he suffered; that God gave them of old his Spirit to instruct them, (Neh. ix, 20); which is not obscurely implied, when looking back



upon the days of old, they are said to have “rebelled, and vexed his Spirit,” (Isa. lxiii, 9, 10,) and when Stephen tells them, “Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost : as your fathers did, so do ye,” it is implied, that even from age to age that blessed Spirit was striving with them ; for there could be no resistance where there was no striving ; and that, in those former ages that Holy Spirit was active among them upon Christ’s account, and by the procurement of his future sacrifice, (presignified by their many sacrifices,) is also sufficiently intimated, in that when it is said, that under Moses they did eat and drink spiritual meat and drink, they are said to have drank of the rock that followed them ; and it is added, “that Rock was Christ.” And by what provocations could they be supposed more to resist and vex the Holy Spirit, than by those wherewith, in the day of provocation and temptation they are said to have lusted in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert,—by which they are expressly said to have tempted Christ, 1 Cor. x, 9? And certainly the privilege was inestimably great, that, when the most of the world besides was nothing else but waste neglected wilderness, they should be an enclosed vineyard under the long-continued droppings and dews of heavenly influence. For it was not but upon high and long provocation that at last God commands his clouds to rain no more rain upon it. Isa. v, 6. How singular a favour was it to be the appropriate plantation, vineyard, and garden of God, taken in from so vast and wild a desert ! and that the God of Abraham would so long continue the relation and be their God ; to bless them with the

choice of his blessings, those whereof his own Spirit was the peculiar source and spring.

4. But when the fullness of time, and the season for the actual immolation of that Sacrifice, was now come, that the immense fullness of its value and virtue might be duly demonstrated and glorified, down goes the enclosure, which the amplitude and extensiveness of God's kind design could no longer endure: and as some time the great prophetic oracle given to Abraham must take effect, "In thy seed (and it is said, not of seeds, as of many, but of seed, as of one, namely, Christ, Gal. iii, 16,) shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;" this is the time. Now must the blessing of Abraham come upon the Gentiles. Nor could any time have been more fitly chosen, that the copiousness and vast diffusion of the effect might demonstrate and magnify the power and fullness of the cause, and even lead the eyes of all unto it. The drawing, so generally of all men, was that which must dignify the cross, and incite all eyes to behold and adore the Son of man lifted up, John, xii, 32, and in the midst of death, even with his dying breath, sending forth so copious and far-spreading a diffusion of spirit and life! And now, had it only been said loosely and at large, that this was brought about by his dying, that might admit a great latitude of sense, and give some room for sinister interpretation. The intention of the expression might be thought sufficiently answered, if, in any way his dying did occasion good impressions upon the minds of men. But when the effect is expressly ascribed to his dying so, as the cause, that is to his being lifted up, to his being made a curse in dying,

by hanging on a tree, and a curse for us to redeem us thereby from the legal curse which lay upon us before; the curse of the law, the doom which the violated law laid upon us, of having the Spirit withheld from us, that thereupon the great and rich blessing might come upon us, of having that Holy Spirit freely and without further restraint communicated to us; this puts the matter out of all dispute, that it was in consideration of his dying that God now gives his Spirit, and leaves no place for contending against it unto any, who have not more mind to object than they can have pretence for it.

It is, then, the plain doctrine of the Scriptures, that the Spirit is given for the restoring of God's temple with men, for the sake of Christ's death and suffering, who was Emmanuel, and in his own person, the *original temple*, out of which each single temple was to arise and spring up, as well as he was the *exemplary temple*, unto which they were all to be conformed.

5. But whereas his sufferings and death have their influence differently to the Spirit's building of any such particular secondary temple, and to his replenishing and inhabiting it; that difference, we shall find, is not inexplicable or very difficult to be represented according to the tenor of the Scriptures also. In order whereto it will be of use to add,—That, as the immediate effect of his sufferings and death, the Spirit, in all the fullness thereof, is first given into his power, and the right of communicating it annexed to his office, as he is the Emmanuel, the Redeemer of sinners, and Mediator between God and them, that it might implant what was necessary,



and root out what should be finally repugnant, either to their duty towards him or their felicity in him.

That this was the end of his office, the very notion of a mediator between God and men doth plainly intimate : “ For Jesus Christ himself suffered once, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” Which must signify not only that he was to render God accessible, expiating by his blood our guilt, but also to make us willing to come to him ; vanquishing by his Spirit our enmity procured also by his suffering the just for the unjust, without both we could not be brought to God, which was, we see, the end of his suffering.

II. Here we are to open Col. i, 19, 20. That all fullness did, upon his suffering, reside in him ; for this purpose is as plainly signified by that remarkable connexion, “ For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell,—and having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.” The *Father* is not in the original text, but is fitly and necessarily understood ; for whose pleasure can this be supposed to be but the Father’s ? and so the current of discourse doth thus run smooth : “ The Father was pleased that all fullness should dwell in him, having made peace by the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself ”—even by him ; for that is inculcated a second time. It was judged necessary to this reconciling design that all fullness should dwell in him. But who did thus judge ? The Father was pleased it should be so ; but upon what consideration ? “ Having made peace by the blood of his cross.” The same *He* that was pleased all fullness

should dwell in him, was so pleased, as having made peace by the blood of his cross. The Father having made peace, or pitched upon this method and laid this foundation of making peace by the blood of his Son's cross, was now content that all fullness should dwell in him, to be diffused by him through the world, in order to his having temples prepared, inhabited, replenished with Divine glory everywhere: not in heaven only, which was already full of them, or where it was easy to suppose he might find such temples ready prepared in all quarters, but even on earth also, where all was waste and desolate, nothing to be seen but forlorn ruins.

III. And it is very ordinary in Scripture to join things in the same period, as if they were of equal concern; when, though they were mentioned together, their concern is very different, and the main stress is intended to be laid but on the one of them, the other being placed there, either as an opposite, the more to illustrate and set off that with which it is joined; or as an introduction, a thing supposed, and which had place already, to which the other is more principally necessary to be added; and then is the form of speech manifestly elliptical, but so as that, to considering readers, it is easy to apprehend what is to be supplied. As when the apostle speaks thus, "God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you;" doth the apostle intend to thank God for their having been the servants of sin? No man can think so. But that, notwithstanding they had been so, they did obey, &c.

The matter may well be so understood in the

place under our present consideration : “by him to reconcile all things to himself, whether things on earth or things in heaven ;” that is, even as well men on earth, where the difficulty was greater, and where enmity against God did rage, where he was set at greatest distance and highest defiance ; as those in heaven, where all was pacate already, and therefore a word was chosen more suitable to the state of their case, who were principally intended, namely, of reconciling ; meaning that, by reconiliation, he would make the state of things on earth, now so filled with enmity against God, suitable to their state above, among whom there was none. And it seems designed for the Redeemer’s more consummate glory, that the perpetual stability of the heavenly state should be owing to him, and to the most inestimable value of his oblation on the cross ; that it should be put upon his account, and be ascribed to the high merit of his pacificatory sacrifice, that they continue in obedience and favour for ever ! For why else is the mention of “the blood of his cross,” so carefully inserted, and that, rather than be omitted, it is even thrust into a parenthesis : “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell, and (having made peace by the blood of his cross) to reconcile all things to himself—on earth—in heaven !” This is the more remarkably designed ; though yet the principal import of the word *reconciled* is accommodated to their case who were principally intended, namely, those on earth who were in enmity with God. And the following words show these to have been here principally intended : “And you, who were sometime alienated,



and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled," &c. As if he had said, He hath not only conciliated to himself, or made sure of the everlasting amity of those who were always dutiful in heaven ; but he hath also recovered the good-will and loyal affection of such on earth as were at enmity, in an apostacy, alienated, and enemies in their minds ; and all by the same means, the virtue and fragrancy of a sacrifice sufficient to fill heaven and earth with its grateful odour, and whose efficacy can never decrease to all eternity. Nor, therefore, is it consequent that the direct intention of this his sacrifice should bear reference to the concerns of angels, whose nature he took not, but from the redundancy of its merit, this inestimable advantage, namely, the permanent stability of their state, may well be supposed to accrue to them ; and, for the greater honour of the Redeemer, they made debtors to him for it.

And why should it seem incongruous, that those most constantly pure and holy creatures above, who are made to owe whatever excellencies they have, within the sphere of nature, to the Son of God, should owe to him also whatsoever they have within the sphere of grace ? Yea, how aptly do things correspond, that, whereas it had been said above, " By him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are on earth," &c., it should also be after said, " By him are all things reconciled," either recovered into or continued in everlasting amity with him ; that is, that whosoever partake of special Divine favour, whether they be of the things on the earth, or the things in heaven, shall for the future be

debtors to him for it. And whereas it is expressly said in Scripture, that “when God raised him from the dead, he set him far above all principality and power,” &c., and that, “being gone into heaven—angels and authorities and powers are made subject to him;” and that he being said to be “the head of all principalities and powers,” he might, by themselves be understood not to be a useless or unbeneficial head to them. Though it also is not to be forgotten, that, at the time when the apostle wrote these words, a considerable part of that holy blessed society, then in heaven, were some time on earth, in a state of enmity against God, and so who needed reconciliation in the strict and proper sense; as they did who were still on earth, and to whom he now more particularly directs his speech, “And you also, who were some time alienated—yet now hath he reconciled,” &c.

But though I could not think it an impertinency to use some endeavour for clearing the whole of this (somewhat obscure) context, coming as it did, in my way, yet the principal thing, with reference to my present purpose, which I consider in it is, that it was upon the account of the blood our Redeemer shed on the cross, that the Father was pleased all fullness should dwell in him as an *original temple*, to serve the purposes of that great reconciling work undertaken by him, the raising up of multitudes of temples, all sprung from this one in this world of ours, that God might dwell with men on earth! that amazing thing! 2 Chron. vi, 18. And that ascending (in order to which he was first, dying, to descend) that he might fill all things, give gifts,

that of his Spirit especially; and that to such as were enemies in their minds by wicked works, even the rebellious also, that the Lord God might have his temple, and dwell with them. And whereas that work must comprehend the working out of enmity from the hearts of men against God, and that a great communication of influence from the Divine Spirit was necessary for the overcoming that enmity; that therefore this fullness must include *all fullness*, an immense treasure and abundance of Spirit, (which is said to be given him, not by measure,) and that therefore his sufferings did obtain this plenitude of Spirit to be first seated in him, as the receptacle and fountain whence it must be derived, and that the power and right of dispensing it should belong to his office, as he was the great reconciler and mediator between God and man. Which also many other texts of Scripture do evidently imply, as when he is represented as a universal plenipotentiary, able to quicken whom he will. And “all power is said to be given him, both in heaven and earth; and that “the Father had given all things into his hands,” which must comprehend the power of giving the Spirit, and which the end of giving him that plenitude of power plainly requires. “Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he might give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him;” the Spirit being given to the root of that life, “they that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.” And that he is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance, (which equally implies the gift of the Spirit,) as well as remission of sins. Nor is the consideration of his suf-



ferings and death less plainly signified to be the ground upon which this fullness of power is given him, when it is said, "Christ both died and revived and rose again, that he might be Lord of the living and the dead." And when, after mention of his being obedient to death, &c., it is said, "Wherefore God hath highly exalted him," &c., that all "should confess Christ is Lord," &c. Having made this digression, we now,

IV. Resume the subject, and further note,

6. That hereupon the Spirit is actually and immediately given by Christ, or by the authority of that office which he bears; than which nothing can be plainer in that he is called the Spirit of Christ. And when our Lord himself uses the expressions about this matter, with such indifferency and as equivalent; either "I will send him," or, "I will send him from my Father," or, "My Father will send him in my name." Which, what can it signify less than that, as the Father was the first fountain of this communication, so the established way and method of it was in and by Christ, from which there was to be no departure? as is also signified in that of the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places (or things) in Christ."

And when we consider, how exact care is taken in well-ordered secular governments, not only that things be done which the affairs of the government required, but that they be done regularly, and in the way which is prescribed and set, so as that every one knows and attends to the business of his own place

and station, and that no one may expect that from the treasurer which is to be done by the chancellor, or that from him which belongs to the secretary of state. If there be any beauty and comeliness in order, where should we more expect to find it, than in the Divine government, and in the conduct and management of the affairs of the supreme and celestial kingdom; wherein only the remoteness of those things from our sense makes every thing seem little and inconsiderable? But did we allow ourselves to retire more frequently out of this world of shadows, and ascend into those glorious regions above, there to contemplate the bright orders of holy loyal spirits all employed in the services of the celestial throne, and to behold Jesus the head of all principalities and powers, the restorer of what was sunk and decayed, and the upholder of the whole universe, even of the noblest parts of it, that were liable to the same lapse and decay—by whom all things consist—we should not think it strange that such deference and honour should belong to his office; that it should be rendered every way so august and great that he should be so gloriously enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and that, when his administrations are manageable with so much ease and pleasure, to one of so immense wisdom, power, and goodness, all acts of grace and favour should more especially pass through his hands. And if we understand any thing of the distinction of persons in the ever-blessed Deity, (whereof if we understand nothing, how do we adventure to affirm any thing?) it is not more difficult to apprehend distinct employments, wherein yet all can never fail to have their

most complacential consent. And when that kind of office was so freely undertaken by the Son—the susception and management whereof hath, no doubt, filled the supreme court at first, and from age to age, with his highest celebrations and praises; and for the execution whereof, when he made his first descent into this world of ours, and was to appear an incarnate God on earth, a proclamation was published in heaven, “Now let all the angels of God worship him;” and in his execution whereof, they had, from time to time afterwards, spontaneously stooped down to behold, with pleased wonder, his surprisingly strange and prosperous methods and performances—who can think it unsuitable to the dignity and authority of so great and so highly magnified an office, to which all the power of heaven and earth was annexed, that it should by consent belong to it to employ the whole agency of the Holy Ghost, in pursuance of its high and great ends?

But now, he having by his blood obtained that this immense plenitude of Spirit should reside in him, not for himself, personally considered, (for so he had it by natural, eternal necessity, without capitulation or procurement,) but as he was invested with such an office, and in order to its being, by the power of that office, communicated to others; it is easy to be conceived, and may be collected from the tenor of holy Scripture, in what different methods it was to be communicated, for the different ends of that communication, namely, the rebuilding of God’s temple on earth, and the constant inhabiting and replenishing it afterwards. Therefore,

7. For the former of these purposes, it is given



more arbitrarily and of more absolute sovereignty, not limited by any certain, published, or known rule, or other than what lay concealed in secret purpose. Here the first principle is given of that life which springs out and exerts itself in the generating and forming of a *living temple*; which grows up into everlasting life, and makes it an eternally living thing. Now whereas he hath so vast a power given him by the Father over all flesh, (which giving, we again note, must signify this not to be the power he had by natural inherence, but by later constitution,) we do know to whom, or to what sort of persons, this eternal life, in the consummate state of it, is to be given, for that is sufficiently declared in Scripture; but we are not told to whom it shall be given in the very initial state, or in the first and seminal principle of it; that is reserved among the secret resolves of the Divine government. And so, taking the whole of it together, (as here we must,) we are only told, He will give it to as many as the Father hath given him. We do find a connexion of predestination, calling, justification, and glorification; but not of a sinner, as such, with any of these. So observable was that of a noted ancient, (S. Jerom,) “He that hath promised pardon to a penitent, hath not (except with very great latitude) promised repentance to a sinner.” To speak here more distinctly,

Ever since the apostacy, even upon the first declared constitution of a Redeemer, and in the shining forth of that first cheering ray of Gospel light and grace, “the seed of the woman shall break the serpent’s head,” a promise was implied of the communication of the Spirit; that curse, which made the

nature of man, as the accursed ground, unproductive of any thing but briers and thorns, and whereby all holy, vital influences were shut up from men, as in an enclosed, sealed fountain, being now so far reversed, for the Redeemer's sake, as that all communication of the Spirit should no longer remain impossible. And hereupon some communication of it, in such a degree as might infer some previous dispositions and tendencies to holy life, seems to have been general, (and is therefore fitly enough wont to be called common grace,) but then, in that lower degree, it is not only resistible, but too generally resisted with mortal efficacy; so as that it builds no living temples, but retiring, leaves men under the most uncomfortable and hopeless (but chosen) shades of death.

When it was said, concerning the old world before the flood, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," it is implied, it had been constantly and generally striving untill then; but that it was now time, by the holy, wise, and righteous judgment of heaven, to cease, and give them over to the destruction which ensued. Which text, it is true, some interpret otherwise; but if we will allow that of 1 Pet. iii, 18—20, to mean that, while Noah, that preacher of righteousness, did it externally, Christ was, by his Spirit, inwardly preaching to that generation, who were, now since, in the infernal prison: not while they were so, (which the text says not,) but in their former days of disobedience on earth; this place will then much agree with the sense, wherein we (with the generality of our interpreters) take the other. Nor are we, therefore, to think there is no stated rule at all, in reference to this case

of God's more general (but less efficacious) striving with men by his Spirit. For we here see, that before God took any people to be peculiar to him from the rest of men, the reason which he gives, why his Spirit should not always strive with man, in common, was, because all "the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually;" that is, that in opposition to the dictates of the blessed Spirit, he gave himself up to the power and government of sensual inclination; his mind, or thinking, considering power and faculty, falling in with the imaginations of sense, and taking part therewith against the Spirit of God; which imported nothing less than a continual rebelling against that Holy Spirit. Now, if we consider this as the declared reason why God's Spirit should not always strive, and compare therewith other passages of Scripture, we may collect, and perceive there is some rule of God's proceeding in this matter, not only settled in heaven, but sufficiently notified on earth also: that is, concerning the extent, not concerning the limitation of this gift; how far God would certainly go in affording it, not how far he would not go: as far as it is sought, complied with, and improved; not how far he would not, in some instances, proceed beyond that. He hath bound us to pray, strive, endeavour, but not tied his own hands from doing surprising acts of favour, above and beyond his promise.

It is plain man had, by his apostacy, cut off all intercourse between God and him; not only was become regardless of it, but disentitled. It was his inclination not to converse with God; it was his



doom that he should not. We have but short and dark hints of God's first transactions with men, but what was written and done afterwards much enlightens and explains them. There was, no doubt, a much more comprehensive and substantial law or rule of duty given to Adam, than that positive statute: "Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat;" that was fundamental to it, and transgressed in the violation of it, and therefore some way implied in it; and if all that *more* were only given by internal mental impression, or was only to be collected from the thorough consideration of God's nature and his own, and of the state of things between God and him, that must have been as intelligible to his yet undepraved mind as written tables or volumes. There must also, accordingly, be much more implied in the subjoined enforcing sanction, or rule of punishment, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die the death," than the vulgar apprehension of dying comes to; for these were the words of the commination or curse upon man if he should transgress. And are we not plainly told, "Christ hath redeemed us from that curse—that this blessing might come upon us—that we might receive the Spirit"? Therefore, this curse did shut up the Spirit from us; and this death must signify a suspension of all vital, holy influence—a continual languishment under the stupifying power of a carnal mind, which we are expressly told is death. And when that first evangelical promise was collaterally and implicitly given, wrapped up in the threatening to the serpent, that "the woman's seed should break his head," it could mean no less than that He that

should afterwards, in the fullness of time, become her seed, and be born of a woman, should redeem us from under that curse, and turn it, in all the consequent horrors of it, upon himself. It was therefore further plain also, that no breath of holy Divine influence was ever more to touch the spirit of man, had it not been for the Redeemer's interposition and undertaking.

But he having interposed, undertaken, and performed as he hath—what is the effect of it? What! Is it that the Spirit should now go forth with irresistible almighty power to convert all the world? That, the event too plainly shows was not the design; or should it immediately supply men with sufficient grace and power to convert themselves? That no scripture speaks; and it were strange, if such sufficient grace were actually given to all, it should prove effectual with so very few. But the manifest effect is, that the Spirit may now go forth (the justice and malediction of the Law not reclaiming against it) and make gentle trials upon the spirits of men, inject some beams of light, and some good thoughts, with which if they comply, they have no cause to despair of more; and so, that which is wont to be called common grace, may gradually lead and tend to that of a higher kind, which is special and finally saving. That light, and those motions which have only this tendency, must be ascribed to the Spirit of God co-operating with men's natural faculties, and not to their own unassisted natural power alone; for we are not sufficient of ourselves to think one right thought. And now, if they rebel against such light and motions, violently opposing their sen-

sual imaginations and desires to their light and the secret promptings of God's Holy Spirit; they hereby vex his Spirit, provoke him to leave them, and do forfeit even those assistances they have had, and might further have expected, upon the Redeemer's account. All which seems to be summed up, as a stated rule, in that of our Saviour—"To him that hath, shall be given; but from him that hath not," (where having manifestly includes use and improvement,) "shall be taken away that which he had." Which latter words must be taken not for a prediction, expressive of the certain event, or what shall be; but a commination, expressing what is deserved, or most justly may be. The true meaning or design of a commination being, that it may never be executed. And to the same sense is that of Prov. i, 23, 24, &c. "Turn at my reproof—I will pour out my Spirit upon you, I will make known my words unto you: but I called, and they refused; I stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; therefore they shall eat the fruit of their own way," &c.

So far then we are not without a stated rule, as to those previous and superable operations of the Spirit of God; according to which we may expect them to be continued and increased, or fear they shall be withheld. But now, because all do more or less resist, and thereby deserve they should cease or commit a forfeiture of them; and sometimes this forfeiture is taken, and sometimes it is not; but the grieved Spirit returns and re-enforces his holy motions, even unto victory; where or when he shall do so, we have no certain published rule, whereby to conclude this way or that. The Son of God here acts as a pleni-



potentiary and sovereign, quickening whom he will. The Spirit (by consent with him) breathes, in order to the vital production of temples, as the wind, where it listeth; or for regeneration, which is the thing there discoursed of in all that context, and even in the next following words, which apply that similitude, "So is every one that is born of the Spirit." And we are therefore elsewhere warned to "work out our salvation with fear and trembling," because God worketh in us, to will and do of his own good pleasure; being under no tie not quite to desist and forsake us at the next opposition he meets with. At least, they that are not within the compass of his covenant, (once sincerely entered,) can lay no claim, in such a case, to his continuance or return.

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## CHAPTER XI.

*The Holy Spirit is given as an Inhabitant of this Temple.*

I. THE Holy Spirit is given not only as the builder, but also, secondly, as an inhabitant of this temple. For which purpose, when by regeneration it is thus built and prepared, the Redeemer gives the Spirit upon other terms, namely, according to the tenor of a certain rule declared and published to the world; and by which a right thereto accrues to these regenerate ones. The unregenerate world, especially such as by frequent resistances had often forfeited all gracious communications of that blessed Spirit, have

nothing to assure them he will ever regenerate them. But being now regenerate, and thereby formed into living temples, they may, upon known and certain terms, expect him to inhabit them as such, and to be statedly their Emmanuel; and that as God, even their own God, he will bless them, and abide with them, and in them, for that gracious purpose. Why else hath he conquered all their reluctancy, and made them his temples? It was against their (former) will, but according to his own. He at first herein, by rough hewings, might displease them, but he pleased himself, and fulfilled hereby "the good pleasure of his own goodness." Nor will he now leave his people, because it pleased him to make them his people: neither is he now the less pleased that he is under bonds, for he put himself under them most freely, and his "gifts and callings are without repentance." But being under bonds, he now puts on a distinct capacity, and treats these his regenerate ones under a different notion from that under which he acted towards other men, or themselves before: not as an absolute unobliged sovereign, that might do or not do for them as he would; but as a trustee, managing a trust committed to him by the eternal Father; as the *great steward* of his family, the prime minister, and curator of all the affairs of his house and temple, which they are all and every one: for as vast as his temple is, where it is made up of all; and as manifold as it is, when every one is to him a single temple; neither is above the comprehension, nor beneath the condescension of his large and humble mind. Neither larger diffusion, nor more particular distribution, signifying him to be greater or less, in all, in every one.

He so takes care of all, as of every one, and of every one, as if he were the only one under his care. He is the first-born among many brethren; and as that imports dignity, so it doth employment; it being his part as such to provide for the good state of the family, which is all named from him, both that part in heaven, and that on earth. Yea, and he may in a true sense be styled *the Father of the family*: though to the *first* in Godhead he is the *Son*; to *us* he is styled the everlasting Father, Isa. ix, 6, Therefore he is under obligation hereto, by his Father's appointment, and his own undertaking.

And that which he hath obliged himself to, is to give the Holy Spirit, or take continual care that it be communicated from time to time as particular exigencies and occasions shall require. It was a thing full of wonder that ever he should be so far concerned in our affairs! But being concerned so deeply as we know he hath been—to be incarnate for us—to be made a sacrifice to God for us, that he might have it in his power to give the Spirit—having become a curse for us, that he might be capable of conferring upon us this blessing; it is now no wonder he should oblige himself to a continual constant care, that his own great and kind design should now not be lost or miscarry. After he had engaged himself so deeply in this design for his redeemed, could he decline further obligation?

And his obligation creates their right, entitles them to this mighty gift of his own Spirit! Concerning which, we shall consider—The *dueness* and the *greatness* or amplitude of this gift; or show, that, as their case is now stated, upon their regenera-



tion, they have a pleadable right to this high privilege, the continued communication of the Spirit. And next, show of how large extent this privilege is, and how great things are contained in it. I scruple not to call it a *gift*, and yet at the same time to assert *their right* to it to whom it is given; not doubting but every one will see that a right accruing by free promise, (as we shall show this doth,) detracts nothing from the freeness of the gift. When the promise only, with what we shall see is directly consequent, produces or creates this right, it is inconceivable that this creature, by resulting naturally, should injure its own parent or productive cause. We shall therefore say somewhat briefly,

1. Of the *dueness* of this continued indwelling presence of the blessed Spirit to the regenerate. And,

(1.) It is due by promise. It is expressly said to be the promise of the Spirit, Gal. iii, 14; but to whom? To the regenerate, to them who are born after the Spirit, as may be seen at large, chap. iv. These (as it after follows) are the children and heirs of the promise, which must principally mean this promise, as it is eminently called, Acts, ii, 38, "Repent and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you," &c., "and to as many as the Lord shall call:" which calling, when effectual, includes regeneration. When this blessed Spirit is called the Spirit of promise, what can that mean but the promised Spirit?

(2.) Their right is the more evident, and what is promised the more apparently due, in that the promise hath received the form of a covenant, whereby the covenanters have a more strongly pleadable right

and claim; to which the rest of men have no such pretence.

It is true that we must distinguish of the covenant—as proposed, and entered.

The *proposal* of it is in very general terms: “Ho, every one that thirsts.—Incline your ear—and I will make an everlasting covenant with you.” And so it gives a remote, future right to such as shall enter into it. But only they have a present actual right to what it contains, that have entered into it: and their plea is strong, having this to say, ‘I have not only an indefinite or less determinate promise to rely upon; but a promise upon terms expressed, which I have agreed to; and there is now a mutual stipulation between God and me. He offered himself, and demanded me; I have accepted him, and given myself. And hereupon I humbly expect and claim all further needful communications of his Spirit, as the principal promised blessing of this covenant.’ Such a one may therefore say, as the Psalmist hath taught him, “Remember thy word to thy servant, in which thou hast caused me to hope.” I had never looked for such quickening influences, if thou hadst not caused me, and been the author to me of such an expectation. Now thou hast quickened me by thy word, so quickening me according to thy word.’—“I will put my Spirit within you,” is a principal article of this covenant. And this expression of putting the Spirit within, must signify not a light touch upon the soul of a man, but to settle it as in the innermost centre of the soul, in order to a fixed abode.

And how sacred is the bond of this covenant! it

is founded in the blood of the Mediator of it. This is, as he himself speaks, “the new testament (or covenant) in my blood,” Luke, xxii, 20. Therefore is this in a varied phrase, said to be the “blood of the covenant:” and therefore is this covenant said to be everlasting: referring to a known maxim among the Hebrews, Pacts, *confirmed by blood*, can never be abolished. “The God of peace—by the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work:” which must imply a continual communication of the Spirit; for it is also added “to do always what is well-pleasing in his sight:” which, who can do without such continual aids? “Coming to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, we come to the blood of sprinkling.” He could not meditate for us upon other terms: and upon those obtains for us the better promises, “spiritual blessings in heavenly things.”

And further, this covenant is ratified by his oath who formed and made it. “My covenant will I not break—Once have I sworn.” By these two immutable things it is impossible for God to lie. Regeneration is the building of this temple; covenanting on our part contains the dedication of it; and what then can follow but constant possession and use?

(3.) The regenerate, as such, are sons, both by receiving a new nature, even a divine, in their regeneration, and a new title in their adoption. Now, hereupon the continual supplies of the Spirit, in this house (or temple) of his, are the children’s bread, Luke, xi, 13. Because they are sons, therefore God sends the Spirit of his Son into their hearts; and he is styled the Spirit of adoption. Therefore they



have a right to the provision of their Father's house.

(4.) The Spirit is, unto these children of God given upon their faith; which must certainly suppose their previous title for the ground of it. They receive "the promise of the Spirit by faith," as by faith they are God's children. Receiving the Son, who was eminently so, and to whom the Sonship did primarily or originally belong; and believing in his name, they thereupon have *power* or right to become the sons of God; being herein also regenerate, "born not of flesh and blood—but of God." And thus, by faith receiving him, by faith they retain him, or have him abiding in them, as he abides in them: for the union is intimate and mutual. They *first* receive him upon the Gospel offer, which, as was said, gave them a remote right, and now retain him, as having an actual right. He dwells in the heart by faith, Eph. iii, 17. But what he doth, in this respect, his Spirit doth; so he explains himself: for when, in those valedictory chapters of St. John's gospel, xiv, xv, xvi, he promises his disconsolate disciples he would come to them, he would see them, he would manifest himself to them, he would abide with them, within a little while they should see him, &c., he intimates to them, that he principally meant all this of a presence to be vouchsafed them by his Spirit, chap. xiv, verses 16—19. And he concerns the Father also with himself in the same sort of commerce: "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you." Thus, in another place, we find the Spirit promiscuously spoken of as the Spirit of God, and the Spirit of Christ;

and the inbeing or indwelling of Christ, and of the Spirit, used as expressions signifying the same thing; when also the operation of God is spoken of by the same indwelling Spirit, Rom. viii, 9—11. Which an eminent father observing, takes occasion to speak of the joint presence of the several Persons of the Trinity, with such, with whom any one is present, because each bears itself inseparably towards the other, and is united most intimately therewith, *wheresoever one hypostasis (or person) is present, there the whole Trinity is present.*—Amazing thing! that the glorious Subsistents in the eternal Godhead should so concentrate in kind design, influence, and operation, towards a despicable impure worm!

But this conjunction infers no confusion; breaks not the order wherein each severally acts towards one end. But that, notwithstanding, we may conceive from whom, through whom, and by whom, what was late a ruinous heap is become an animated temple, inhabited by the Divine presence, wherein we ought not to forget how eminent and conspicuous the part is of our Lord Christ, and upon how costly terms he obtained that the blessed Spirit should so statedly, and upon a right claimable by faith, employ his mighty agency in this most gracious and wonderful undertaking! being made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith. Whence also it is said, that after our believing, we are “sealed with the Spirit of promise;” that is, by that seal by which God knows, or owns, or acknowledges them that are his, though they may not always know it themselves. Hereupon also our Lord hath assured us, from them

that believe in him shall flow (as out of the belly of a conduit) rivers of living waters, which it is said he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believed should receive.

Much more might be alleged, from many texts of the Old and New Testament, to evince the right which believers, or they who are God's more peculiar people, have to the abiding indwelling presence of his Spirit, as the inhabitant of that temple which they are now become. But that matter being plain we shall proceed to what was next proposed;—to show,

2. The ample extent and comprehensiveness of this privilege, which I shall the rather enlarge upon, that from thence we may have the clearer ground upon which afterwards to argue—how highly reasonable and congruous it was, that so great a thing, and of so manifest importance to God's having a temple and residence among men, should not be otherwise communicated than in and by Emmanuel, the founder and restorer of this temple.

(1.) And we cannot have a truer or surer measure of the amplitude and extensiveness of this gift, than the extent and comprehensiveness of the covenant itself to which it belongs. To which purpose, let it be considered that this covenant of God in Christ, of which we are now speaking, may be looked upon two ways; that is,

We may view it abstractly, taking the frame and model of it, as it were, *in agreement* to be collected and gathered out of the holy Scriptures. Or, we may look upon it as it is *now transacted*, and entered into by the blessed God, and this or that awakened, considering, predisposed soul. Now here,



Take it the *former way*, and you find this article, concerning the gift or communication of the Holy Ghost, standing there as one great grant contained in the Gospel covenant. And it is obvious to observe, as it is placed there, what aspect it hath upon both the parts of the covenant, “I will be your God—you shall be my people.” Which will be seen, if

You consider this covenant as *actually entered into*, or as the covenanting parties are treating, the one to draw the other to enter this covenant. And so we shall see that our consent, both that God shall be our God, and that we will be of his people, with all previous inclinations thereto, and what immediately results from our covenanting, do all depend upon this communication of the Spirit; and otherwise, neither can he do the part of a God to us, nor we the part that belongs to his people towards him. By all which we shall see the vast extent of the gift. It is the Mediator’s part to bring the covenanting parties together;—he is therefore said to be the Mediator of the new covenant. He rendered it possible by the merit of his blood, that the offended Majesty of heaven might, without injury to himself, consent; and that the Spirit might be given to procure our consent, which, as Mediator or Emmanuel, he gives; and when he gives it in so copious an effusion, as to be victorious, to conquer our aversion and make us cease to be rebellious, then he enters to dwell. Till then there is no actual covenanting; no plenary consent on our part to what is proposed in the covenant in either respect; we neither agree that God shall be our God, nor that we will be of his people. This speaks this gift a great thing and of vast extent,

looking for the present upon the two parts of the covenant summarily; and afterwards considering what each part more particularly contains in it. But if in practice it be so far done as is requisite to a judicious and preponderating determination of will, (which may yet afterwards admit of higher degrees,) how great a thing is now done! Their state is distinguished from theirs who are strangers to the covenant, who are without Christ, and without God in the world. From hence results,

[1.] An express reconciliation between God and thee; for this is a league of friendship—enmity ceasing.

[2.] A fixed special relation; “I entered into covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine.” How great and high a privilege! Relations are said to be of minute entity, but great efficacy; and it is observable what the philosopher says of them, that their *whole being*, namely, of the things related, is related to another. Admirable! *all the Divine Being* related to me a worm! And that all this may be the plainer—let us,

(2.) But consider more distinctly what the great *summary* of God’s part of this covenant contains; what is the most principal promise of it; the dependence of our part thereon; upon what terms that which is distinct is promised; how far what is distinctly promised is coincident with this gift of the indwelling Spirit, both in respect of this present and the future eternal state.

[1.] The known and usual summary of this covenant on God’s part is, “I will be their God;” as it is set down in many places of both Testaments. Now, what can be meant, more principally, by his

being their God, than giving them his indwelling Spirit? Wherein without it can he do the part of a God to them? By it he both governs and satisfies them: is both their supreme and sovereign Lord in the one regard, and their supreme and sovereign Good in the other. Doth being their God intend no more than an empty title? or, what would be their so great advantage in having only a nominal God? Yea, and he is pleased himself to expound it of his continued gracious presence, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God;” alluding to his continuing his tabernacle among them, as is promised, “I will set my tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not abhor you; and I will walk among you, and I will be your God,” &c. And what did that tabernacle signify but this *living temple*, whereof we speak, as a certain type and shadow of it? Agreeably to which his covenant is expressed with evident reference to the days of the Gospel, and the time of the Messiah’s kingdom, (plainly meant by David’s being their king and prince for ever,) Ezek. xxxvii, 24—27. “David, my servant, shall be king over them,” (spoken many an age after he was dead and gone,) “and their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them—it shall be an everlasting covenant with them—and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them; yea, I will be their God.” That *yea*, the exegetical note, is observable, “my sanctuary and tabernacle shall be with them,” (that is, “I will dwell in them.” And could it be meant of an uninhabited, desolate sanctuary, or tabernacle, that should be with them for evermore?). And



why is this his constant inhabiting presence to be with them? The emphatical *yea*, with what follows, informs us; “yea, I will be their God:” as if he should say, ‘I have undertaken to be their God, which I cannot make good to them if I afford them not my indwelling presence. To be to them a distant God, a God affar off, can neither answer my covenant nor the exigency of their case: they will but have a God, and no God, if they have not with them and in them a divine, vital, inspiriting, inactuating presence, to govern, quicken, support, and satisfy them, and fill them with an all-sufficient fullness. They would soon, otherwise, be a habitation for Ziim and Ochim, or be the temple but of idol gods.’

It is therefore evident, that this summary of God’s part of his covenant, “I will be their God,” very principally intends his dwelling in them by his Spirit.

And the restipulation, on their part, to be his people, (which is generally added in all the places wherein the other part is expressed,) signifies their faith, by which they take hold of his covenant, accept him to be their God, dedicate themselves to be his people, his peculiar, his mansion, his temple, wherein he may dwell. Now this their self-resigning faith, taken in its just latitude, carries with it a twofold reference to Him as their sovereign Lord, as their sovereign Good; whom, above all other, they are to obey and enjoy. But can they obey him if he do not put his Spirit into them, to write his law in their hearts, and “cause them to walk in his statutes”? Or can they enjoy him, if they love him not as their best good? which love is the known fruit of the Spirit. Whereupon, after such self-resignation and

dedication, what remains but that “the house of the Lord be filled with the glory of the Lord”?

[2.] Let us consider what is the express, more peculiar kind of the promises of this covenant, in the Christian contradistinct to the Mosaical administration of it. It is evident, in the general, that the promises of the Gospel covenant are, in their nature and kind, compared with those that belonged to the Mosaical dispensation, more spiritual; therefore called better promises, Heb. viii, 6. They are not promises of secular felicity, of external prosperity, peace, and plenty, as those other most expressly were. It is true, indeed, that the covenant with Israel, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, was not exclusive of spiritual good things. For the communication of the Spirit was the blessing of Abraham, and that, as he was the father of that people, the head of a community, now to be much more extended, and take in the Gentiles; the time being come when all nations were to be blessed in him, which is said to be the gospel that was preached to Abraham, Gal. iii, 8. But, in the mean time, the Spirit was given less generally, and in a much lower measure; wherefore, in that purposed comparison, 2 Cor. iii, between the legal and the evangelical dispensation; though a certain glory did attend the former, yet that glory is said to be no glory, in respect of the so much excelling glory of this latter; and the thing wherein it so highly excelled was the much more copious effusion of the Spirit. That whereas, under the former dispensation, Moses was read for many ages with little efficacy, a veil being upon the people’s hearts, signified by the (mystical) veil, wherewith;

when he conversed with them, he was wont to cover his face; that comparative inefficacy proceeding from hence, that little of the light, life, and power of the Spirit accompanied that dispensation; now, under the Gospel dispensation, the glory of the Lord was to be beheld as in a glass, with unveiled face, so as that, beholding it, we might be changed (so great an efficacy and power went with it) into the same likeness, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord; which is the scope of the latter part of that chapter, from verse 10 to 18. How great were the splendour and magnificence of Solomon's temple, yet how much more glorious is that which is built of living stones! And as the whole frame of that former economy was always less spiritual, a lower measure of the Spirit always accompanying it; so when it stood in competition, as cor rival to the Christian dispensation, being hereupon quite deserted by the Spirit, it is spoken of as weak, worldly, carnal, and beggarly. Therefore the Apostle expostulates with the Galatian Christians, verging towards Judaism: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish, having begun in the Spirit, are you now made perfect by the flesh?" Speaking of the two covenants, under allegorical representation, he makes the former, given upon Mount Sinai, to be signified by Agar the bond-woman, and by the terrestrial Jerusalem, which was then in bondage with her children, as productive but of a servile race, born after the flesh only, as Ishmael was, destitute of the Divine Spirit; (which, where it is, there is liberty;) the other by Sarah, a free-woman, and by the celestial Jerusalem, which is free, with her chil-



dren, all born from above of the Divine Spirit; which spiritual seed, signified by Isaac, are said at once to be born after the Spirit, and by promise. And this can import no less than that the ancient promise, (given long before the law, upon Mount Sinai, namely, four hundred and thirty years, and expressly called the covenant of God, in Christ; most eminently to be made good in the days of the Gospel, after the cessation of the Mosaical institution, as it was made before it,) must principally mean the promise of the Spirit. Which is most plain from that of the apostle Peter to his convinced, heart-wounded hearers, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost; for the *promise* is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off,” (this promise not being to be confined to them and their children, but to reach the Gentiles also,) “even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” And surely that which is, by way of excellency, called *the promise*, must be the more principal promise of this covenant; which it is also signified to be, in that account given of it by the prophets, Isa. xliv, 3, and lix, 20, 21; Jer. xxxi, 33; quoted Heb. viii, 10, (where, though the Spirit be not expressly named, yet those effects of it are which manifestly suppose it,) and Ezek. xxxvi, 25, 27; Joel, ii, 28. This new covenant is distinguished from the former, by the more certain, more general, and more efficacious communication of the Spirit promised in it, as is plainly implied, Jer. xxxi, and Heb. viii, 9—11.

[3.] It will further tend to evidence that the

Spirit is given as a settled inhabitant, upon the known terms of this covenant, if we consider upon what terms it is promised, what is distinctly, but, however, most conjunctly, promised therewith, namely, all the relative graces of justification, pardon of sin, and adoption. These are promised, as is apparent, in the same covenant, and upon faith, which is our taking hold of, and entering into, the covenant, our accepting God in Christ to be our God, and giving up ourselves to be his people; and is inclusive of repentance. For a sinner, one before in a state of apostacy from God, cannot take him to be his God, but in so doing he must exercise repentance towards God. His very act of taking him, in Christ, is turning to him through Christ, from the sin by which he had departed and apostatized from him before. Therefore must the indwelling Spirit be given, upon the same certain and known terms as is also expressed in Gal. iii, 14, Eph. i, 13, &c., Acts, ii, 38, 39.

[4.] Now faith and repentance being first given in forming God's temple, consider how coincident the gift of the Spirit, as an inhabitant, is with remission of sin, or with whatsoever relative grace as such, is distinct from that which is inherent, subjected in the soul itself, and really transmutative of its subject. But we are to consider withall, how manifestly the latter of these is involved in the former. Giving the Spirit (the root and original of subjective grace) implies two things: first, conferring a right to it; and, secondly, actual communication. The former belongs to relative grace, the latter to real; but the former is in order to the latter, and the latter most certainly follows upon the former.

Both are signified by one name of *giving*; and do both, in a sort, make one entire legal act, which the former begins and the latter consummates. Divers things are not herein given, but only a title to and the possession of the same thing; nor by divers donations, but by the concurrence of such things as are requisite to make up one and the same. And let it now be considered.

(3.) What there is promised in the Gospel covenant, besides what may be comprehended in the gift of the Spirit. We will first set aside what is manifestly not promised in it besides, and then more closely enquire about what may seem distinctly promised, and see in how great part that residue will be reducible hither.

[1.] As to what is manifestly not promised besides, it is plain, there is not promised in it a part and portion in a particular land or country on earth, as there was in the old covenant to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their seed, which land was, we know, called the “land of promise;” and unto which the body of that people had so certain a title, upon the condition of their continued obedience, that they were sure never to be removed out of it; or if they had made a general defection, and were thereupon forsaken of God and given up to invading enemies, that should dispossess them, they were as sure, upon their general repentance, to be restored and settled there again; as may be seen in Solomon’s prayer at the dedication of the temple, and God’s most gracious and particular answer thereto, and in divers places of the Old Testament besides.

If particular persons brake this covenant by grosser



transgressions, they were to be cut off from this good land, and by Moses's law, at the mouth of two or three witnesses, to die without mercy; and so, by such execution of justice, the body of the people was kept safe from Divine displeasure; the land was not defiled so as to spew out its inhabitants.

But if the people did generally revolt, so as that the ordinary methods of punitive justice could have no place, God took the matter into his own hands, and did justice upon them himself by casting them out. This is the covenant which, it is said, they brake, Jer. xxxi, 32, and Heb. viii. The new Gospel covenant is apparently of no such import, or hath no such additament to the spiritual blessings of it.

Nor, again, doth it promise more indefinitely temporal blessings of any kind with certainty upon any condition whatsoever, even of the highest faith, the most fervent love to God, or the most accurate obedience and irreprehensible sanctity attainable on earth; as if the best and holiest men should therefore be any whit the more assured of constant health, ease, opulency, or peace in this world. We know the ordinary course of Providence (which cannot justly be understood to be a misinterpreter of God's covenant) runs much otherwise; and that such things as concern the good estate of our spirits and inward man, are the only things we can, upon any terms, be sure of by this covenant; the tenor of it not warranting us to look upon external good things as otherwise promised, than so far as they may be subservient to these, and to our better serving the interest and honour of God and the Redeemer; of which things he reserves the judgment to himself: and to Him,

by this covenant we absolutely devote ourselves to serve and glorify him in his own way, and in whatsoever external circumstances his wisdom and good pleasure shall order for us; being ourselves only assured of this in the general, that “all things shall work together for good to us, if we love him,” &c., but still esteeming it our highest good (as we cannot but do, if we love him as we ought) to be most serviceable to his glory, and conformable, in our habitual temper, to his will. Spiritual good things, then, are, by the tenor of this covenant, our only certainties. Other things indeed cannot be the matter of absolute universal promise. Their nature refuses it and makes them incapable. They are but of a mutable goodness; may be sometimes, in reference to our great end, good for us; and sometimes, or in some circumstances, evil and prejudicial. And being in a possibility to become evil in that relative sense, (as what hinders a greater good is then an evil,) if they ever be actually so, they are then no longer matter of a promise. The promise would in that case cease to be a promise; for can there be a promise of an evil? It would then necessarily degenerate and turn into a threatening.

But it may be said of those good things that are of a higher kind and nature, that respect our souls and our states godward, there seem to be some vastly different from this of giving the Spirit. Therefore,

[2.] We are next to enquire what they are, and how far they may be found to fall into this.

*Remission of sin* is most obvious, and comes first in view upon this account. And let us bethink

ourselves what it is. We will take it for granted that it is not a mere concealed will or purpose to pardon on the one hand, (for no one in common speech takes it so; a purpose to do a thing signifies it not yet to be done;) nor mere not punishing, on the other. If one should be ever so long only forborne and not punished, he may yet be still punishable, and will be always so if he be yet guilty. It is therefore such an act as doth in law take away guilt or dissolve the obligation to suffer punishment.

It is therefore to be considered what punishment a sinner was, by the violated law of works and nature, liable to in this world or in the world to come; and then what of this is, by virtue of the Redeemer's sacrifice and covenant, remitted. He was liable to whatever miseries in this life God should please to inflict—to temporal death, and to a state of misery hereafter, all comprehended in this threatening, "Thou shalt die the death;" if we will take following scriptures and providences for a commentary upon it.

Now, the miseries to which the sinner was liable in this world, were either external or internal. Those of the former sort, the best men still remain liable to. Those of the inner man were certainly the greater, both in themselves and in their tendency and consequence; especially such as stand in the ill dispositions of men's minds and spirits godward, unapprehensiveness of him; alienation from him, willingness to be as without him in the world. For that the spirits of men should be thus disaffected, and in this averse posture towards God, in whom only it could be possible for them to be happy, how could



it but be most pernicious to them, and virtually comprehensive of the worst miseries? And whence came these evils to fall into the reasonable intelligent mind and spirit of man? Was it by God's infusion? Abhorred be that black thought! Nor could it be, if they were not forsaken of God, and the holy light and influence of his Spirit were not withheld. But is more evil inflicted upon men than either the threatening or the sentence of the law contained? That were to say he is punished above legal desert, and beyond what it duly belonged to him to suffer. Experience shows this to be the common case of men. And did that threatening and sentence concern Adam only, and not his posterity? How then come they to be mortal, and otherwise externally miserable in this world, as well as he? But how plainly is the matter put out of doubt, that the suspension of the Spirit is part (and it cannot but be the most eminent part) of the curse of the Law, by that of the apostle, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us, that this blessing might come upon us," even the Gentiles, as well as Abraham's seed, "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit."

But now what is there of all the misery duly incumbent upon man in this world by the constitution of that law of works and nature, remitted and taken off by virtue of the covenant or law of grace or faith from them that have taken hold of it, or entered into it? Who dare say, God doth not keep covenant with them? And we find they die as well as other men; and are as much subject to the many inconveniences and grievances of human life. And it is not

worth the while to talk of the mere notion under which they suffer them. It is evident that God doth them no wrong, in letting these be their lot; and therefore, that as they were by the law of nature deserved, so God hath not obliged himself, by the covenant or law of grace, to take or keep them off; for then surely he had kept his word. That he hath obliged himself to do that which is more, and a greater thing to bless and sanctify them to their advantage and gain in higher respects, is plain and out of question. Which serves our present purpose and crosses it not.

For upon the whole, that which remains the actual matter of remission in this world, is whatsoever of those spiritual evils would be naturally consequent upon the total restraint and withholding of the Spirit.

And that this is the remission of sin in this life, which the Scripture intends, is plain from divers express places. When the apostle Peter's heart-pierced hearers cry out in their distress, "What shall we do?" he directs them thus: "Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall (he adds) receive the Holy Ghost; for the promise is to you, and your children." As though he had said, 'the great promise of the Gospel covenant is that of the gift of the Holy Ghost.' It doth not promise you worldly wealth or ease, or riches or honours; but it promises you that God will be no longer a stranger to you, refuse your converse, withhold his Spirit from you; your souls shall lie no longer waste and desolate. But as he hath mercifully approached your spirits, to make them

habitable, and fit to receive so great and so holy an intimate, and to your reception whereof nothing but unremitted sin could be any obstruction; as, upon your closing with the terms of the Gospel covenant, by a sincere believing intuition towards him whom you have pierced, and resolving to become Christians, whereof your being baptized, and therein taking on Christ's badge and cognizance, will be the fit and enjoined sign and token, and by which federal rite, remission of sin shall be openly confirmed and solemnly sealed to you; so by that remission of sin the bar is removed, and nothing can hinder the Holy Ghost from entering to take possession of your souls, as his own temple and dwelling-place.'

We are by the way to take notice, that this fulfilling of the terms of the Gospel covenant is aptly enough, in great part, here expressed by the word *repentance*; most commonly it is by that of *faith*. It might as fitly be signified by the former in this place, if you consider the tenor of the foregoing discourse, namely, that it demonstrated to them their great wickedness in crucifying Christ as a malefactor and impostor, whom they ought to have believed in as a Saviour; now to repent of this was *to believe*, which yet is more fully expressed by that which follows—"and be baptized in (or rather into) the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is in the whole plain, that their reception of the Holy Ghost, as a dweller, stands in close connexion, as an immediate consequent, with their having their sins actually remitted, and that, with their repenting their former refusing of Christ as the Messiah, their now becoming Christians, or taking on Christ's name,



whereof their being baptized was to be only the sign and the solemnization of their entrance into the Christian state, and, by consequence, a visible confirmation of remission of sin to them. They are therefore directed to be baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, or unto a covenant-surrender of themselves to Christ, whereof their baptism was, it is true, to be the signifying token for the remission of sins, which remission therefore must be understood connected, not with the sign, but with the thing which it signified. And it was only a more explicit repentance of their former infidelity, and a more explicit faith, which the apostle now exhorts them to, the inchoation whereof he might already perceive, by their concerned question, “What shall we do?” intimating their willingness to do any thing that they ought; that their hearts were already overcome and won; and that the Holy Ghost had consequently began to enter upon them: the manifestation of whose entrance is elsewhere, as to persons adult, found to be an antecedent requisite to baptism, and made the argument why it should not be withheld, as Acts, x, 47, “Can any man forbid that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?”

*Remission of sin*, therefore, as it signifies giving a right to future impunity, signifies giving a right to the participation of the Spirit; the withholding whereof was the principal punishment to be taken off. And as it signifies the actual taking off of that punishment, it must connote the actual communication of the Spirit. Therefore, upon that faith which is our entrance into the Gospel covenant, the curse

which withheld the Spirit is removed, and so we receive the promise of the Spirit (or the promised Spirit) by faith, as is plain from Gal. iii, 13, 14.

The same reference of giving (or continuing) the Spirit unto forgiveness of sin, we may observe in that of the Psalmist: "Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me;" which it is plain was dreaded and deprecated as the worst of evils, but which would be kept off if iniquity were blotted out. And as to this, there was no more difference in the case, than between one whose state was to be renewed, and one with whom God was first to begin. And that summary of spiritual blessings promised in the new covenant, Jer. xxxi, 31, 32, &c., and Heb. viii, which all suppose the promised gift of the Spirit itself, as the root of them all—"I will put my law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts," &c., is all grounded upon this: "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." When, therefore, the punishment of sin is remitted, *quoad jus*, or a right is granted to impunity, the Spirit is, *de jure*, given; or a right is conferred unto this sacred gift. When actually (upon that right granted) the punishment is taken off, the Spirit is actually given; the withholding whereof was the principal punishment we were liable to in this present state.

And as to *justification*, the case cannot differ, which itself so little differs from pardon, that the same act is pardon, being done by God as a sove-

reign Ruler acting above law, namely, the law of works ; and justification, being done by him as sustaining the person of a Judge according to law, namely, the law of grace.

*Adoption* also imports the privilege conferred of being the sons of God. And what is that privilege ? (for it is more than a name)—that such are led by the Spirit of God ; which Spirit is, therefore, as the peculiar cognizance of their state, called the Spirit of adoption, and forms theirs suitably thereto ; for it was not fit the sons of God should have the spirits of slaves, Rom. viii. It is not the spirit of bondage that is given them, as there it is expressed, but a free generous spirit ; not of fear, but of love and power and of a sound mind. Most express is that text, Gal. iv, 6, “ Because they are sons, he hath sent the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, that enables them to say, Abba, Father ;” makes them understand their state, whose sons they are, and who is their Father, and really implants in them all filial dispositions and affections.

Wherefore, it is most evident that the relative grace of the covenant only gives a right to the real grace of it ; and that the real grace communicated in this life, is all comprehended in the gift of the Spirit—even that which flows in the external dispensations of Providence not excepted. For as outward good things, or immunity from outward afflictions, are not promised in this new covenant, further than as they shall be truly and spiritually good for us ; but we are, by the tenor of it, left to the suffering of very sharp afflictions, and the loss or want of all worldly comforts, with assurance, that will turn to our greater spiritual advantage ; so the grace and



sanctifying influence that shall make them do so, is all from the same Fountain, the issue of the same blessed Spirit. We only add, that eternal life in the close of all depends upon it, not only as the many things already mentioned do so that are necessary to it, but as it is signified to be itself the immediate perpetual spring thereof: "They that sow to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." And how plainly hath our blessed Lord signified the vast extent of this gift, when, by good things in general, Matt. vii, 11, he lets us know he means the Holy Spirit, Luke, xi, 13.

We therefore see, that this great gift of the Holy Ghost is vouchsafed entirely upon the Redeemer's account, and by the authority of his office, for the *building* and *inhabiting* the desolated temple of God with men. For the *rebuilding* of it, by that absolute fullness of power, which, by the sacrifice of himself, he hath obtained should be in him. For the *reinhabiting* of it by virtue, and according to the tenor, of that covenant now solemnly entered, and which was established and ratified in the blood of that same Sacrifice. Herein appears the dueness of it to the regenerate; or that they have a real right to it who are born of the Spirit; and we have also seen the large amplitude and vast comprehensiveness of this gift.

II. We therefore proceed, in the next place, to show,

(2.) How highly reasonable it was the Holy Spirit of God should not be vouchsafed for these purposes, upon other terms. And this we shall see,

[1.] By mentioning briefly, what we have been

showing all this while, the *vast extent* and *amplitude* of this gift. Let it be remembered, that the most considerable part of the penalty and curse incurred by the apostacy, was the withholding of the Spirit; from which curse, in the whole of it, Christ was to redeem us, by being made a curse for us. By the same curse also, our title to many other benefits ceased and was lost, and many other miseries were inferred upon it. But this *one*, of being *deprived of the Spirit*, did so far surmount all the rest, that nothing else was thought worth the naming with it, when the curse of the law, and Christ's redemption of us from it, are so designedly spoken of together. If only lesser penalties were to have been remitted, or favours conferred of an inferior kind, a recompense to the violated law and justice of God and the affronted majesty of his government had been less necessarily insisted on. But that the greatest thing imaginable should be vouchsafed upon so easy terms, and without a testified resentment of the injury done by ruining his former temple, was never to be expected. Nothing was more becoming or worthy of God, than when man's revolt from him so manifestly implied an insolent conceit of his self-sufficiency, and that he could subsist and be happy alone, he should presently withhold his Spirit, and leave him to sink into that carnality which involved the fullness of death and misery in it. "To be carnally-minded is death." It belonged to the majesty and grandeur of the Deity, it was a part of godlike state and greatness, to retire and become reserved, to seclude himself, and shut up his holy cheering influences and communications from a

haughty miscreant, that it might try and feel what a sort of god it could be to itself. But to return: the state of the case being unaltered and every way the same as when he withdrew, no reparation being made, no atonement offered, had been, instead of judging his offending creature, to have judged himself; to rescind his own sentence as if it had been unjust; to tear his act and deed, as if it had been the product of a rash and hasty passion, not of mature and wise counsel and judgment; the indecency and unbecomingness whereof had been the greater and the more conspicuous, by how much the greater and more peculiar favour it was to restore his gracious presence, or (which is all one) the influences of his Holy Spirit. Further consider,

[2.] That since nothing was more necessary for the restitution of God's temple, it had been strange if, in the constitution of Emmanuel for this purpose, this had been omitted: for it is plain, that without it things could never have come to any better state and posture between God and man; God must have let him be at the same distance, without giving him his Spirit. Neither could He honourably converse with man, nor man possibly converse with Him. Man would ever have borne towards God an implacable heart. And whereas it is acknowledged, on all hands, his *repentance* at least was necessary both on God's account and his own, that God might be reconciled to him who, without intolerable diminution to himself, could never otherwise have shown him favour. He had always carried about him *the heart that could not repent*. The "carnal mind," which is "enmity against God, is neither subject to



him nor can be," had remained in full power; there had never been any stooping or yielding on man's part. And there had remained, besides, all manner of impurities: fleshly lusts had retained the throne; the soul of man had continued a cage of every noisome and hateful thing; the most unfit in all the world to have been the temple of the holy blessed God. It had neither stood with his majesty to have favoured an impenitent, nor with his holiness to have favoured so impure a creature. Therefore, without the giving of his Spirit to mollify and purify the spirits of men, his honour in such a reconciliation had never been salved.

And take the case as it must stand on man's part, his happiness had remained impossible. He could never have conversed with God, or taken complacency in him, to whom he had continued everlastingly unsuitable and disaffected. No valuable end could have been attained, that it was either fit God should have designed for himself, or was necessary to have been effected for man. In short, there could have been no temple: God could never have dwelt with man; man would never have received him to dwell.

[3.] But it is evident this was not omitted in the constitution of Emmanuel. It being provided and procured by his dear expense, that he should have in him a fullness of Spirit: not merely as God; for so in reference to offending creatures it had been enclosed: but as Emmanuel, as a Mediator, a dying Redeemer; for only by such a one, or by him as such, it could be communicated; so was there a sufficiency for this purpose of restoring God's temple.

And why was he in this way to become sufficient, if afterwards he might have been waived, neglected, and the same work have been done another way?

[4.] It could only be done this way, in and by Emmanuel. As such, he had both the natural and moral power in conjunction, which were necessary to effect it.

The *natural power* of Deity which was in him, was only competent for this purpose. Herein had he the advantage infinitely of all human power and greatness. If an offended secular prince had ever so great a mind to save and restore a condemned favourite, who, besides that he is of so haughty a pride, and so hardened in his enmity, that he had rather die than supplicate, hath contracted all other vicious inclinations, is become infamously immoral, debauched, unjust, dishonest, false, and we will suppose stupid, and bereft of the sprightly wit that graced his former conversation—his merciful prince would fain preserve and enjoy him as before; but he cannot change his qualities, and cannot but be ashamed to converse familiarly with him, while they remain unchanged. Now, the blessed Emmanuel, as he is God, can, by giving his Spirit, do all his pleasure in such a case. And he hath as such, too,

The *moral power* of doing it most righteously and becomingly of God, that is, upon consideration of that great and noble sacrifice, which as such he offered up. He is now enabled to give the Spirit: he might otherwise do any thing for man, rather than this; for it imports the greatest intimacy imaginable. All external overtures and expressions of kindness,

were nothing in comparison of it. And no previous disposition towards it, nothing of compliance on the sinner's part, no self-purifying, no self-loathing for former impurities, no smiting on the thigh, no saying, 'What have I done,' could be supposed antecedent to this communication of the Spirit! The universe can afford no like case, between an offending wretch and an affronted ruler. If the greatest prince on earth had been ever so contumeliously abused by the most abject peasant, the distances are infinitely less than between the injured glorious Majesty of heaven and the guilty sinner; the injury done this majesty incomprehensibly greater.

And besides all other differences in the two cases, there is this most important one, as may be collected from what hath been so largely discoursed, that the principal thing in the sentence and curse upon apostate man, was, that God's spirit should retire and be withheld, so that he should converse with him by it no more. The condemning sentence upon a criminal, doth in secular governments extend to life and estate; such a one might be pardoned as to both, and held ever at a distance. If before he were a favourite, he may still remain discountured. Familiar converse with his prince was ever a thing to which he could lay no legal claim, but was always a thing of free and arbitrary favour. But suppose, in this case of delinquency, the law and his sentence did forbid it for ever; and suppose that vile insolent peasant, before under obligation to his prince for his daily livelihood and subsistence, now under condemnation for most opprobrious affronts and malicious attempts against him; he relents not, scorns mercy,



defies justice: his compassionate prince rushes, notwithstanding, into his embraces, takes him into his cabinet, shuts himself up with him in secret: but all this while, though by what he does he debases himself beyond all expectation or decency, the principal thing is still wanting, he cannot alter his disposition. If he could give him a truly right mind, it were better than all the riches of the Indies. This greatest instance of condescension he cannot reach, if he ever so gladly would. It is not in his power, even when he joins bosoms, to mingle spirits with him; and so must leave him as incapable of his most valuable end as he found him.

In the present case, what was in itself so necessary to the intended end, was only possible to Emmanuel; who herein becomes most intimate to us, and in the fullest sense admits to be so called; and was, therefore, necessary to be done by him: unless his so rich sufficiency, and his end itself, should be lost together.

Thus far we have been considering the temple of God individually taken, as each man, once become sincerely good and pious, renewed, united with Emmanuel, that is, with God in Christ, and animated by his Spirit, may be himself a single temple to the most high God.

III. I might now pass on to treat of the external state of the Christian church, and of the whole community of Christians, who, collectively taken, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Cornerstone, in whom fitly framed and builded together, they grow unto a holy temple in the Lord; and

are, in this compacted state, a habitation of God through the Spirit. But this larger subject, the outer-court of this temple, is, I find, beset and overspread with scratching briars and thorns. And for the sacred structure itself, though other foundation none can lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ, yet some are for superstructing one thing, some another; some gold, silver, precious stones; others wood, hay, stubble. I am, for my part, content that every man's work be made manifest when the day shall declare it.

Great differences there have long been, and still are, about setting up the pinnacles, and adjoining certain appendices, which some have thought may innocently and becomingly belong to it. And very different sentiments there have been about modifying the services of it. Some too are for garnishing and adorning it one way, some another. And too many agitate these little differences with so contentious heats and angers, as to evaporate the inward spirit and life, and hazard the consumption of the holy fabric itself. Ill-willers look on with pleasure, and do hope the violent convulsions which they behold will tear the whole frame in pieces, and say in their hearts, "Down with it even to the ground." But it is built on a rock, against which the gates of hell can never prevail!

It ought not to be doubted, but that there will yet be a time, of so copious an effusion of the Holy Spirit, as will invigorate it afresh, and make it spring up out of its withered state into its primitive liveliness and beauty; when it shall, according to the intended spiritual meaning, resemble the external

splendour of its ancient figure, Sion, the perfection of beauty; and arise and shine, the glory of the Lord being risen upon it. But if before that time there be a day that shall burn as an oven, and make the hemisphere as one fiery vault; a day wherein the jealous God shall plead against the Christian church, for its lukewarmness and scandalous coldness in the matter of serious substantial religion, and no less scandalous heats and fervours about trivial formalities, with just indignation, and flames of consuming fire; then will the straw and stubble be burnt up; and such as were sincere, though too intent upon such little trifles, be saved yet so as through fire.

A twofold effusion we may expect of the *wrath* and of the *Spirit* of God. The former to vindicate himself, the other to reform us. Then will this temple no more be termed forsaken; it will be actually and in fact what in right it is always, “Bethel; the house of God and the gate of heaven.” Untill then, little prosperity is to be hoped for in the Christian church; *spiritual* prosperity, without a large communication of the Spirit, it cannot *have*; *external* prosperity, without the Spirit, it cannot *bear*. It was a noted pagan’s observation and experiment,—“*How incapable a weak mind is of a prosperous state.*” SEN. In heaven there will be no need of afflictions: on earth, the distempers of men’s minds do both need and cause them. The pride, avarice, envyings, self-conceitedness, abounding each in their own sense, minding every one their own things, without regard to those of another, a haughty confidence of being always in the right, with contempt



and hard censures of them that differ, spurning at the royal law, of doing as one would be done to; of bearing with others as one would be borne with; evil-surmisings, the imperiousness of some, and peevishness of others, to be found among them that bear the Christian name, will not let the church, the house of God, be in peace; and deserve that it should not, but that he should let them alone to punish themselves and one another.

But the nearer we approach on earth to the heavenly state, which only a more copious and general pouring forth of the blessed Spirit will infer, the more capable we shall be of *inward* and *outward* prosperity both together. Then will our differences vanish of course. The external pompousness of the church will be less studied, the life and spirit of it much more; and if I may express my own sense, as to this matter, it should be in the words of that worthy ancient,\* namely, That supposing an option or choice were left me, I would choose to have lived in a time when the temples were less adorned with all sorts of marbles, the church not being destitute of spiritual graces. In the mean time, untill those happier days come wherein Christians shall be of one heart and one way, happy are they that can attain so far to bear one another's yet remaining differences. And who, since it is impossible for all to worship together within the walls of the same material temple, choose ordinarily to do it, where they observe the nearest approach to God's own rule and pattern; and where, upon experience, they find most of spiritual advantage and edification, not

\* Isidor. Pelusi, L. ii, Eph. 236.

despising, much less paganizing those that are built with them upon the same foundation because of circumstantial disagreements ; nor making mere circumstances, not prescribed by Christ himself, the measures and boundaries of Christian communion, or any thing else that Christ hath not made so ; who abhor to say (exclusively) Christ is here or there, so as to deny him to be any where else ; or to confine his presence to this or that party ; or to a temple so or so modified, by no direction from himself. And if any, through mistake or the prejudices of education and converse, be of narrower minds, and will refuse our communion unless we will embrace theirs upon such terms as to abandon the communion of all other Christians, that are upon the same foundation with ourselves and them ; even as to them we retain a charitable hope, that our blessed Lord will not therefore exclude them ; because, through their too intense zeal for the little things of which they have made their partition-wall, they exclude us. If again we be not too positive or too prone to dispute about those minute matters that have been controverted by the most judicious and sincere servants of our Lord, on the one hand, and the other, in former days, and with little effect ; as if we understood more than any of them ; had engrossed all knowledge ; and wisdom were to die with us ! and that with our bolt too suddenly shot, we could outshoot all others that ever had gone before us ; if our minds be well furnished with humility, meekness, modesty, sincerity, love to God, and his Christ, and our brethren, no otherwise dis-

tinguished, than by their visible avowed relation to him: this will constitute us such temples as whereunto the blessed God will never refuse his presence, and do more to keep the Christian church in a tolerable good state, untill the *times of restitution* come, than the most fervent disputations ever can.

IV. And so I shall take leave of this subject, in hope that, through the blessing of God, it may be of use to some that shall allow themselves to read and consider it. Only I request such as are weary of living as without God in the world, that they defer not to invite and admit the Divine presence; untill they see all agreed about every little thing that belongs to his temple, or that may be thought to belong to it, but resolve upon what is plain and great, and which all that are serious, that have any regard to God, or their own everlasting well-being, cannot but agree in, that is, forthwith to “lift up the everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in.” Do it without delay or disputation. Let others dispute little punctilioes with one another as they please; but do not you dispute this grand point with Him. Look to Emmanuel; consider him in the several capacities and in all the accomplishments, performances, acquisitions, by which He is so admirably fitted to bring it about, that God may have his temple in your breast. Will you defeat so kind and so glorious a design? Behold, or listen, doth he not stand at the door and knock?

Consider as exemplary the temper of the royal Psalmist, how he sware—how he vowed—I will not come into the tabernacle of my house, nor go up



into my bed ; I will not give sleep to my eyes, nor slumber to my eye-lids, untill I have found out a place for the Lord, a habitation for the mighty God ! Yours is a business of less inquisition, less expense ! His temple is to be within you. Lament, O bitterly lament the common case, that he may look through a whole world of intelligent creatures, and find every breast, untill he open, shut up against him ! All agreeing to exclude their most gracious rightful Lord, choosing rather to live desolate without him !

The preparation, or prepared mansion, is a penitent, purged, willing heart ! Fall down and adore this most admirable and condescending grace ; that the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, who, having made a world, and surveying the work of his hands, enquires, “ Where shall be my house, and the place of my rest ? ” and thus resolves it himself : “ The humble, broken, contrite heart ! there, there I will dwell ! ”

If you have such a temple for him, *dedicate it*. Make haste to do so ; doubt not its suitableness. It is his own choice, his own workmanship, the regenerate new creature. He himself, as Emmanuel, hath procured and prepared it, knowing what would be most grateful, most agreeable to him, to the most exalted Majesty—the most profound, humble, self-abasement. Upon this consummative act, the dedicating of this temple, I might here fitly enlarge ; but having published a Discourse already some years ago, under this title of “ Self-Dedication,” thither I refer you. And because this must be a living temple ; there is also another Discourse upon these words,

“Yield yourselves to God, as those that are alive from the dead.” \* That also, such as are inclined, may, through God’s gracious assisting influence, with eyes lift up to heaven, peruse to some advantage.

\* The two Discourses by John Howe, on “Self-Dedication,” and on “Yielding ourselves to God,” are already published in a previous Volume of this Series of SELECT CHRISTIAN AUTHORS, along with his Discourse on “The Redeemer’s Tears Wept over Lost Souls.”









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